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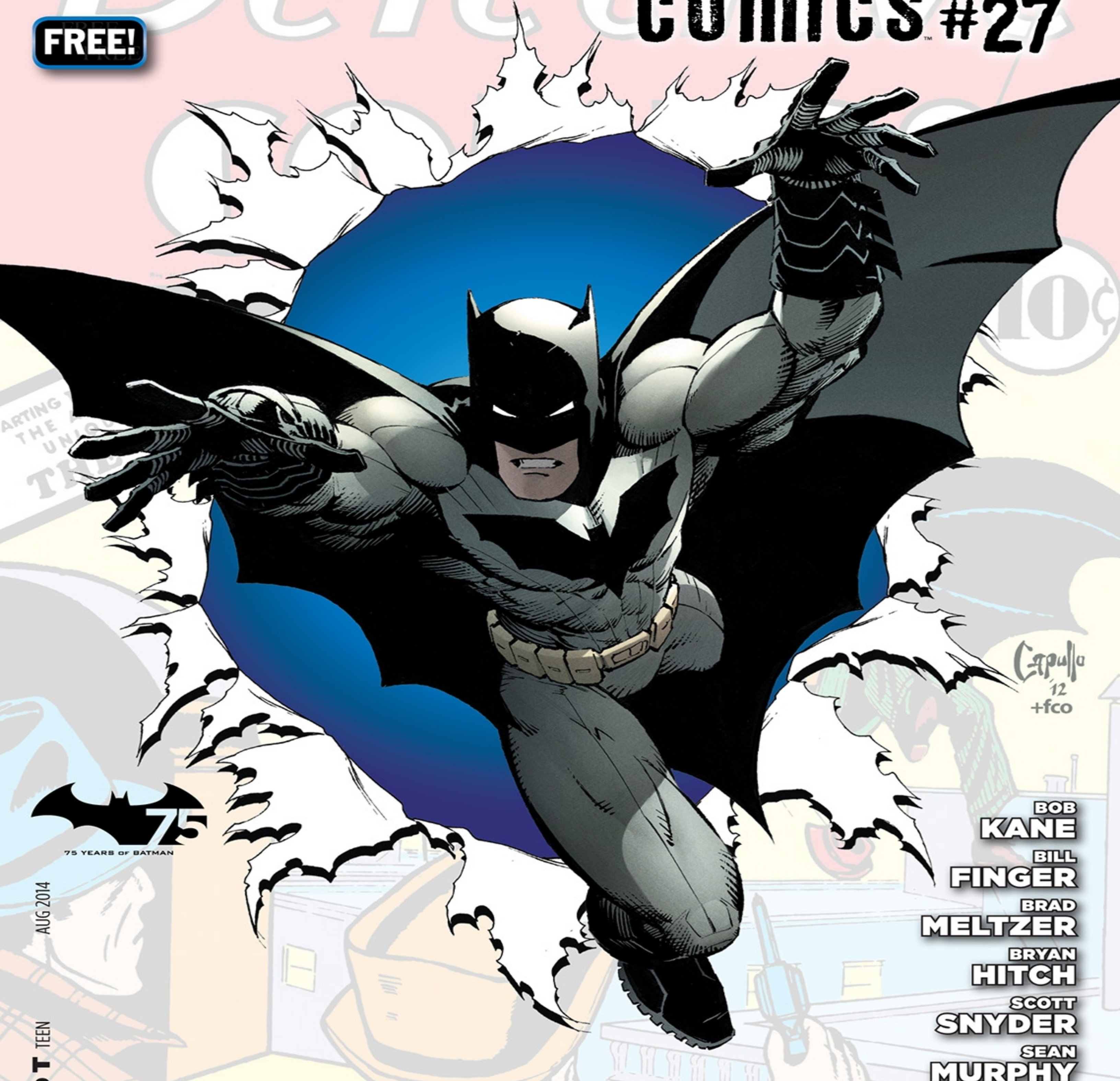
Batman DETECTIVE COMICS #27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64 PAGES
10¢
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75 YEARS OF BATMAN

AUG 2014

RATED T TEEN

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SPECIAL EDITION

BOB KANE
BILL FINGER
BRAD MELTZER
BRYAN HITCH
SCOTT SNYDER
SEAN MURPHY
CHIP KIDD

[redacted]

75 YEARS OF BATMAN

DC Entertainment Celebrates Batman's 75th Anniversary

First appearing in the comic book *Detective Comics* #27, which hit newsstands on March 30, 1939, and featuring artwork by Bob Kane and a script by Bill Finger, Batman emerged from the shadows to become the world's most popular Super Hero and dominate all media. In feature films, TV shows, radio, video games, publishing and merchandise, this most human of Super Heroes has battled some of fiction's greatest villains using his intellect, cunning and an arsenal of gadgets to further his quest for justice.

"We're celebrating 75 years of Batman and he's never felt more new or more vibrant than he does now. The Dark Knight has been featured in nearly every medium for three quarters of a century, and the success he has achieved around the world never ceases to amaze me. We have great pride carrying on his legacy in comics."
- Dan DiDio, Co-Publisher of DC Entertainment

"*Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* changed my life when I was a senior in college. The landmark story by Frank Miller, Klaus Janson and Lynn Varley renewed my enthusiasm for comics. The level of sophistication to the storytelling, the narrative, the political themes and the social themes blew me away and inspired me to pursue comics as a profession. Batman appeals to everyone from little kids to older fans. I'm honored to be part of the creative process that guides Batman's crimefighting career." - Jim Lee, Co-Publisher of DC Entertainment

The first published adventure of The Bat-Man (as he was then known) was in the May 1939 issue of *Detective Comics.* The character had been conceived by a 22-year-old Kane at the request of DC editor Vince Sullivan. Kane drew the first story with his frequent collaborator, Bill Finger, scripting. The character was so successful that one year later the first comic book devoted exclusively to the Caped Crusader's adventures, *Batman* #1, hit newsstands, and the world has never been the same.

This special edition of *Detective Comics* #27 features a retelling of the very first Batman story, "The Case of The Chemical Syndicate," written by New York Times #1 bestselling author Brad Meltzer and superstar artist Bryan Hitch, plus an acclaimed tale of the Dark Knight set in the far future titled "Twenty-Seven," by current *Batman* writer extraordinaire Scott Snyder and artist Sean Murphy, his sensational partner on the acclaimed Vertigo series *The Wake.* Plus, you'll get a special sneak preview of Brad Meltzer and renowned designer Chip Kidd's reimagining of the first Batman story.

Please enjoy this comic and join with us to celebrate 75 years of The Dark Knight.

For the latest information and exclusive content celebrating Batman's 75th anniversary, visit www.Batman75.com.

Batman created by BOB KANE.

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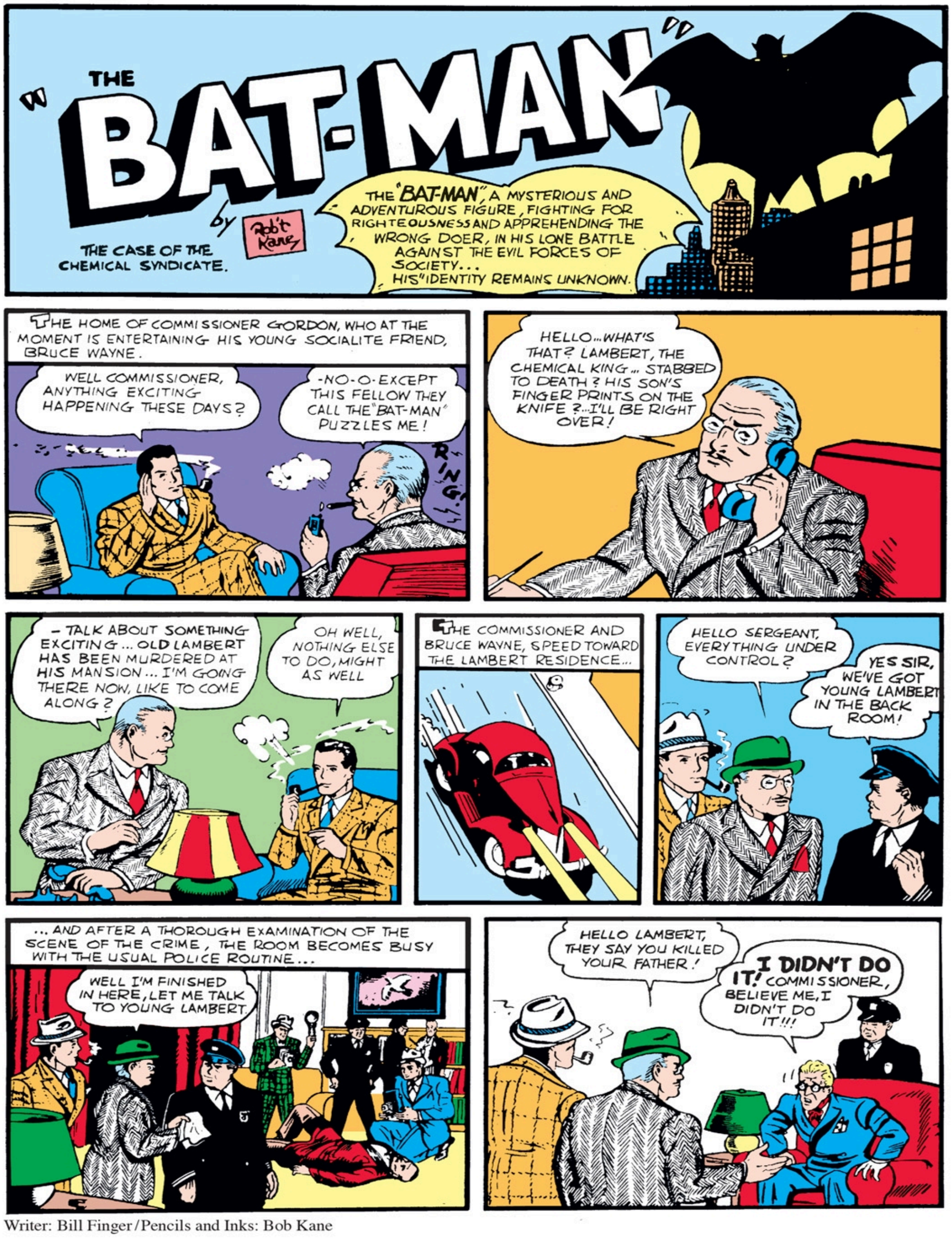
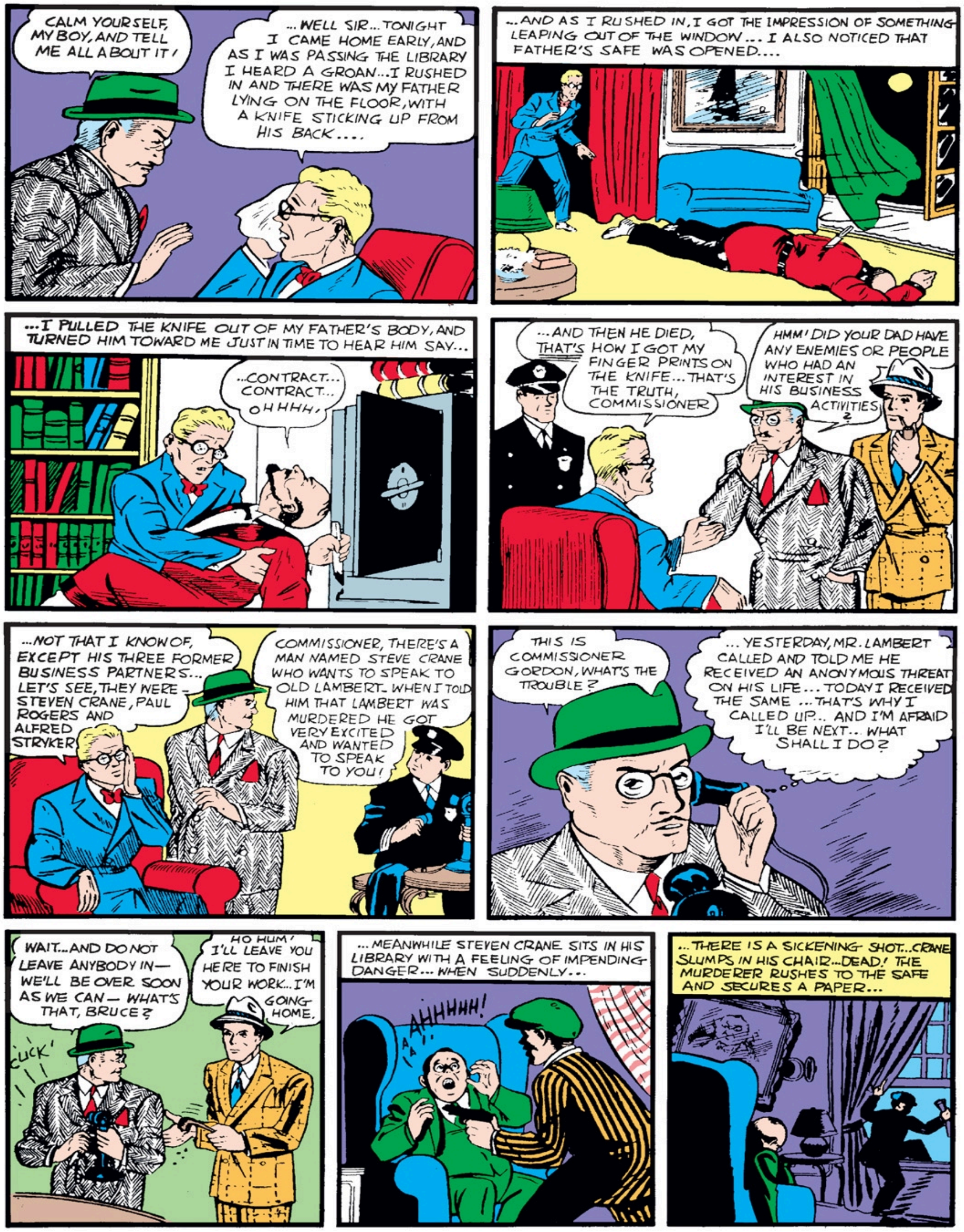
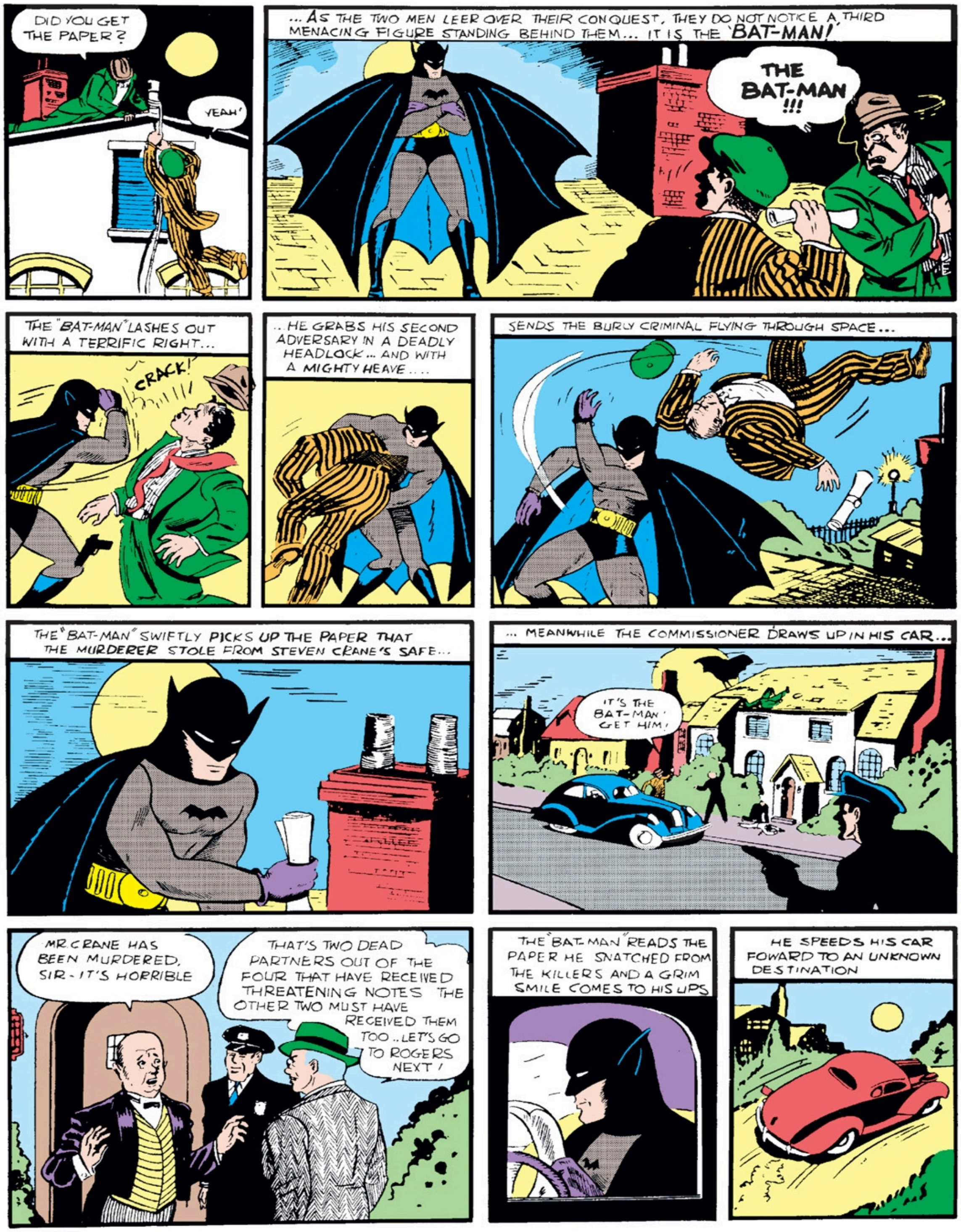
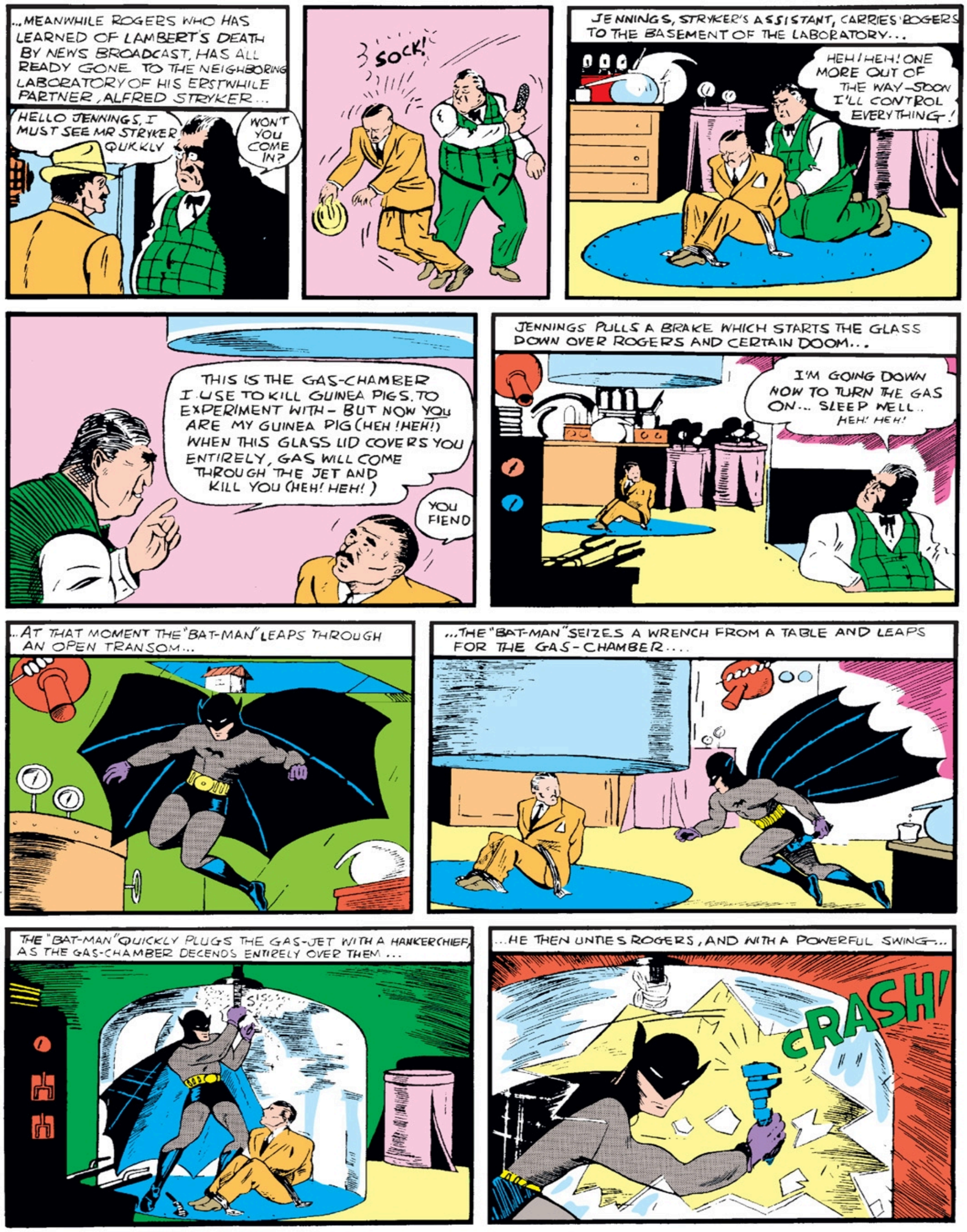
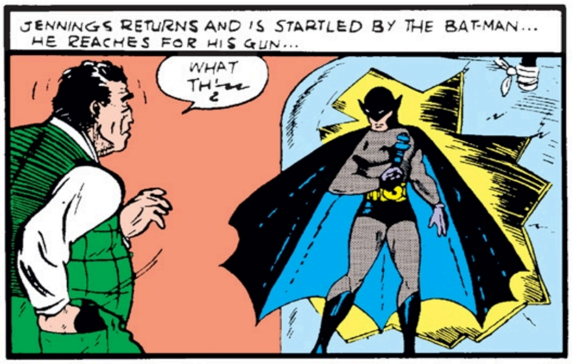

THE
"BAT-MAN"
by Rob't Kane
THE CASE OF THE CHEMICAL SYNDICATE.
THE "BAT-MAN", A MYSTERIOUS AND ADVENTUROUS FIGURE, FIGHTING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND APPREHENDING THE WRONG DOER, IN HIS LONE BATTLE AGAINST THE EVIL FORCES OF SOCIETY... HIS"IDENTITY REMAINS UNKNOWN.
THE HOME OF COMMISSIONER GORDON, WHO AT THE MOMENT IS ENTERTAINING HIS YOUNG SOCIALITE FRIEND, BRUCE WAYNE.
WELL COMMISSIONER, ANYTHING EXCITING HAPPENING THESE DAYS?
-NO-O-EXCEPT THIS FELLOW THEY CALL THE "BAT-MAN" PUZZLES ME!
R-I-N-G!
HELLO...WHAT'S THAT? LAMBERT, THE CHEMICAL KING... STABBED TO DEATH? HIS SON'S FINGER PRINTS ON THE KNIFE?...I'LL BE RIGHT OVER!
-TALK ABOUT SOMETHING EXCITING... OLD LAMBERT HAS BEEN MURDERED AT HIS MANSION... I'M GOING THERE NOW, LIKE TO COME ALONG?
OH WELL, NOTHING ELSE TO DO, MIGHT AS WELL
THE COMMISSIONER AND BRUCE WAYNE, SPEED TOWARD THE LAMBERT RESIDENCE...
HELLO SERGEANT, EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL?
YES SIR, WE'VE GOT YOUNG LAMBERT IN THE BACK ROOM!
...AND AFTER A THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF THE SCENE OF THE CRIME, THE ROOM BECOMES BUSY WITH THE USUAL POLICE ROUTINE...
WELL I'M FINISHED IN HERE, LET ME TALK TO YOUNG LAMBERT.
HELLO LAMBERT, THEY SAY YOU KILLED YOUR FATHER!
I DIDN'T DO IT! COMMISSIONER, BELIEVE ME, I DIDN'T DO IT!!!

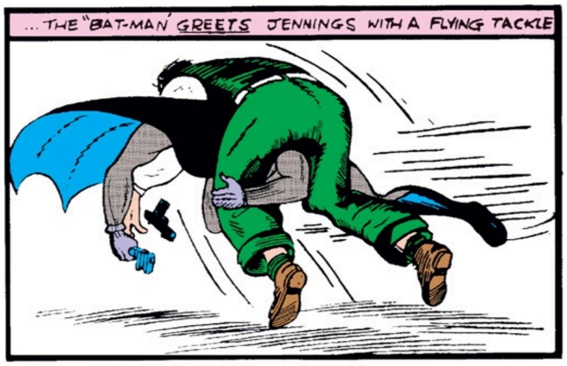
Writer: Bill Finger/Pencils and Inks: Bob Kane

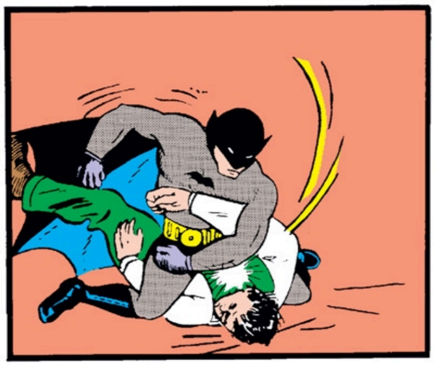

CALM YOURSELF, MY BOY, AND TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT!
...WELL SIR... TONIGHT I CAME HOME EARLY, AND AS I WAS PASSING THE LIBRARY I HEARD A GROAN...I RUSHED IN AND THERE WAS MY FATHER LYING ON THE FLOOR, WITH A KNIFE STICKING UP FROM HIS BACK....
...AND AS I RUSHED IN, I GOT THE IMPRESSION OF SOMETHING LEAPING OUT OF THE WINDOW... I ALSO NOTICED THAT FATHER'S SAFE WAS OPENED....
...I PULLED THE KNIFE OUT OF MY FATHER'S BODY, AND TURNED HIM TOWARD ME JUST IN TIME TO HEAR HIM SAY...
...CONTRACT... CONTRACT... OHHHH!
...AND THEN HE DIED, THAT'S HOW I GOT MY FINGER PRINTS ON THE KNIFE... THAT'S THE TRUTH, COMMISSIONER
HMM! DID YOUR DAD HAVE ANY ENEMIES OR PEOPLE WHO HAD AN INTEREST IN HIS BUSINESS ACTIVITIES?
...NOT THAT I KNOW OF, EXCEPT HIS THREE FORMER BUSINESS PARTNERS... LET'S SEE, THEY WERE - STEVEN CRANE, PAUL ROGERS AND ALFRED STRYKER
COMMISSIONER, THERE'S A MAN NAMED STEVE CRANE WHO WANTS TO SPEAK TO OLD LAMBERT. WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT LAMBERT WAS MURDERED HE GOT VERY EXCITED AND WANTED TO SPEAK TO YOU!
THIS IS COMMISSIONER GORDON, WHAT'S THE TROUBLE?
... YESTERDAY, MR. LAMBERT CALLED AND TOLD ME HE RECEIVED AN ANONYMOUS THREAT ON HIS LIFE... TODAY I RECEIVED THE SAME ... THAT'S WHY I CALLED UP... AND I'M AFRAID I'LL BE NEXT... WHAT SHALL I DO?
WAIT...AND DO NOT LEAVE ANYBODY IN— WE'LL BE OVER SOON AS WE CAN— WHAT'S THAT, BRUCE?
HO HUM! I'LL LEAVE YOU HERE TO FINISH YOUR WORK... I'M GOING HOME.
CLICK!
...MEANWHILE STEVEN CRANE SITS IN HIS LIBRARY WITH A FEELING OF IMPENDING DANGER... WHEN SUDDENLY...
AAHHHHH!
...THERE IS A SICKENING SHOT...CRANE SLUMPS IN HIS CHAIR...DEAD! THE MURDERER RUSHES TO THE SAFE AND SECURES A PAPER...

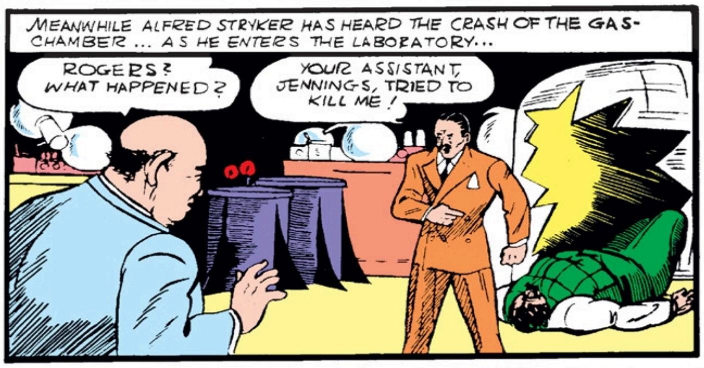

DID YOU GET THE PAPER?
YEAH!
...AS THE TWO MEN LEER OVER THEIR CONQUEST, THEY DO NOT NOTICE A THIRD MENACING FIGURE STANDING BEHIND THEM... IT IS THE 'BAT-MAN!'
THE BAT-MAN !!!
THE "BAT-MAN" LASHES OUT WITH A TERRIFIC RIGHT...
CRACK!
..HE GRABS HIS SECOND ADVERSARY IN A DEADLY HEADLOCK... AND WITH A MIGHTY HEAVE....
SENDS THE BURLY CRIMINAL FLYING THROUGH SPACE...
THE "BAT-MAN" SWIFTLY PICKS UP THE PAPER THAT THE MURDERER STOLE FROM STEVEN CRANE'S SAFE...
... MEANWHILE THE COMMISSIONER DRAWS UP IN HIS CAR...
IT'S THE BAT-MAN! GET HIM!
MR CRANE HAS BEEN MURDERED, SIR - IT'S HORRIBLE
THAT'S TWO DEAD PARTNERS OUT OF THE FOUR THAT HAVE RECEIVED THREATENING NOTES. THE OTHER TWO MUST HAVE RECEIVED THEM TOO.. LET'S GO TO ROGERS NEXT!
THE "BAT-MAN" READS THE PAPER HE SNATCHED FROM THE KILLERS AND A GRIM SMILE COMES TO HIS LIPS
HE SPEEDS HIS CAR FOWARD TO AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION

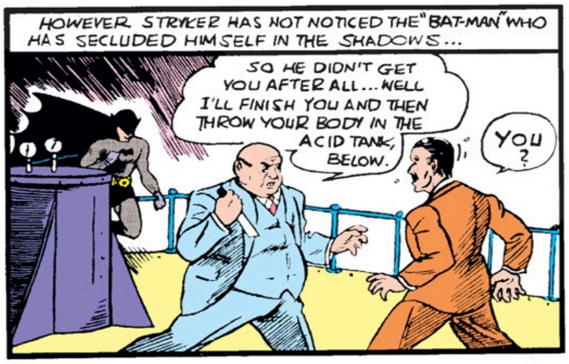

...MEANWHILE ROGERS WHO HAS LEARNED OF LAMBERT'S DEATH BY NEWS BROADCAST, HAS ALL READY GONE TO THE NEIGHBORING LABORATORY OF HIS ERSTWHILE PARTNER, ALFRED STRYKER...
HELLO JENNINGS, I MUST SEE MR STRYKER QUKKLY
WON'T YOU COME IN?
SOCK!
JENNINGS, STRYKER'S ASSISTANT, CARRIES ROGERS TO THE BASEMENT OF THE LABORATORY...
HEH! HEH! ONE MORE OUT OF THE WAY—SOON I'LL CONTROL EVERYTHING!
THIS IS THE GAS-CHAMBER I USE TO KILL GUINEA PIGS TO EXPERIMENT WITH—BUT NOW YOU ARE MY GUINEA PIG (HEH! HEH!) WHEN THIS GLASS LID COVERS YOU ENTIRELY, GAS WILL COME THROUGH THE JET AND KILL YOU (HEH! HEH!)
YOU FIEND
JENNINGS PULLS A BRAKE WHICH STARTS THE GLASS DOWN OVER ROGERS AND CERTAIN DOOM...
I'M GOING DOWN NOW TO TURN THE GAS ON... SLEEP WELL.. HEH! HEH!
...AT THAT MOMENT THE "BAT-MAN" LEAPS THROUGH AN OPEN TRANSOM...
...THE "BAT-MAN" SEIZES A WRENCH FROM A TABLE AND LEAPS FOR THE GAS-CHAMBER....
THE "BAT-MAN" QUICKLY PLUGS THE GAS-JET WITH A HANKERCHIEF, AS THE GAS-CHAMBER DECENDS ENTIRELY OVER THEM...
...HE THEN UNTIES ROGERS, AND WITH A POWERFUL SWING...
CRASH!

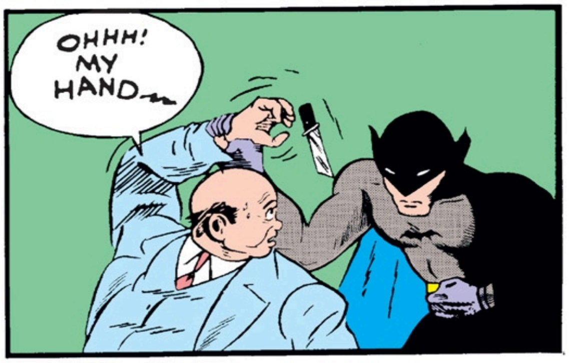

JENNINGS RETURNS AND IS STARTLED BY THE BAT-MAN... HE REACHES FOR HIS GUN...
WHAT TH'-- ?

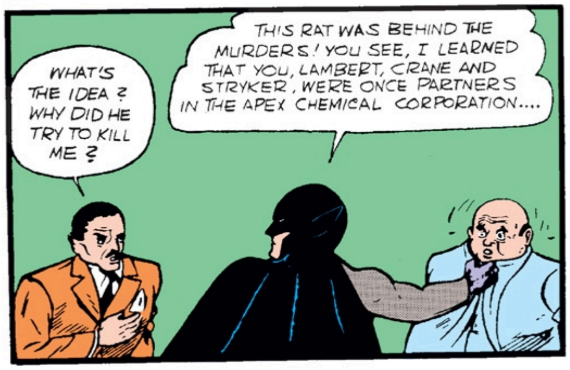

...THE "BAT-MAN" GREETS JENNINGS WITH A FLYING TACKLE

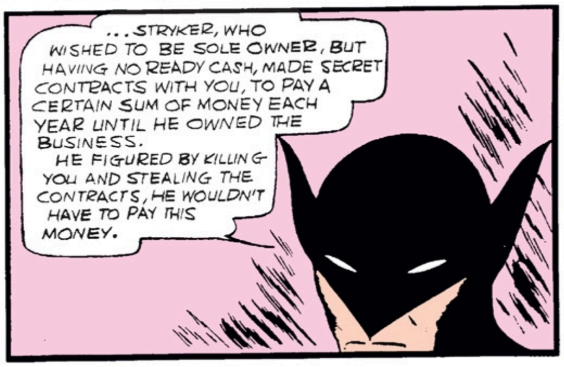


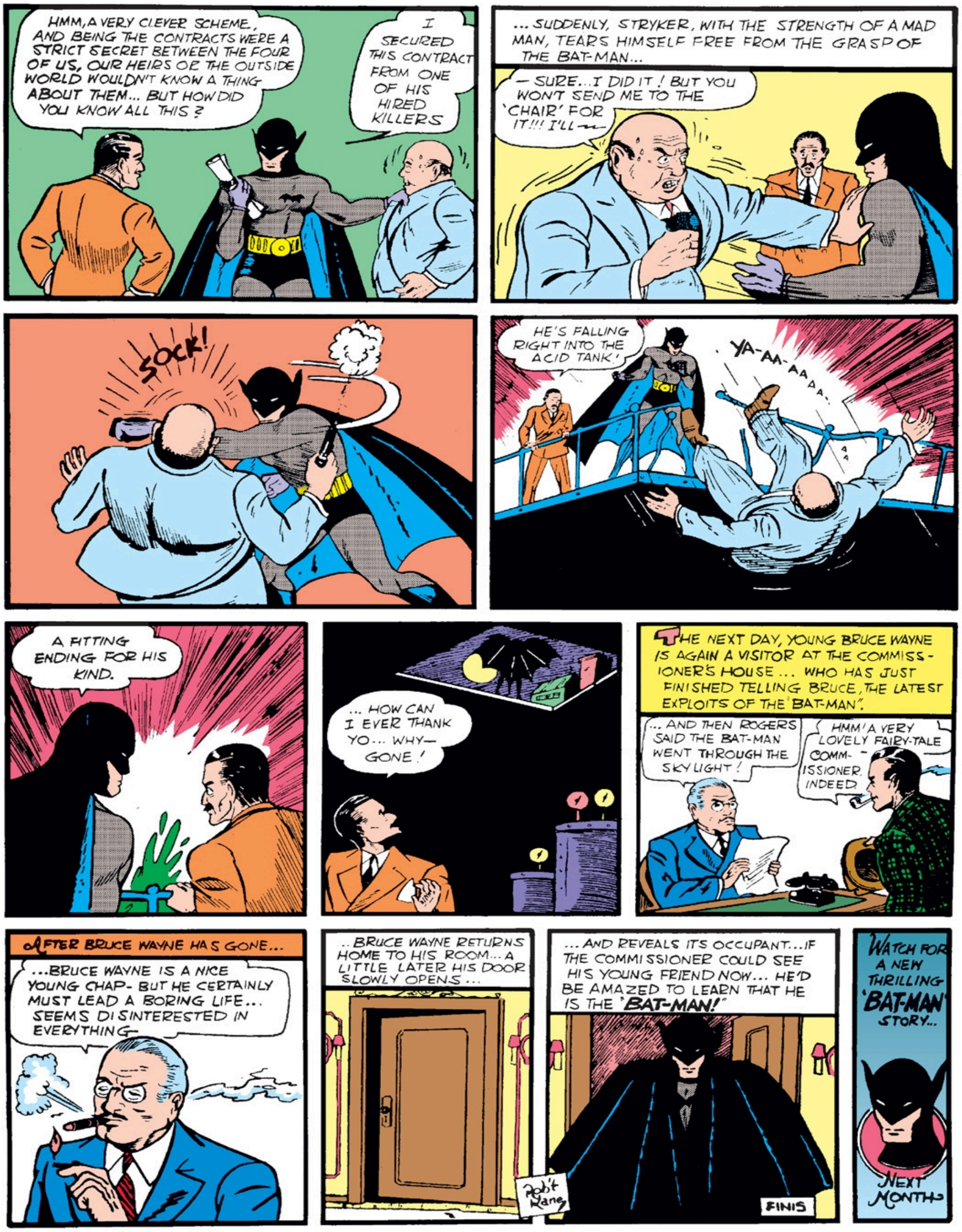

MEANWHILE ALFRED STRYKER HAS HEARD THE CRASH OF THE GAS-CHAMBER ... AS HE ENTERS THE LABORATORY...
ROGERS? WHAT HAPPENED?
YOUR ASSISTANT, JENNINGS, TRIED TO KILL ME!

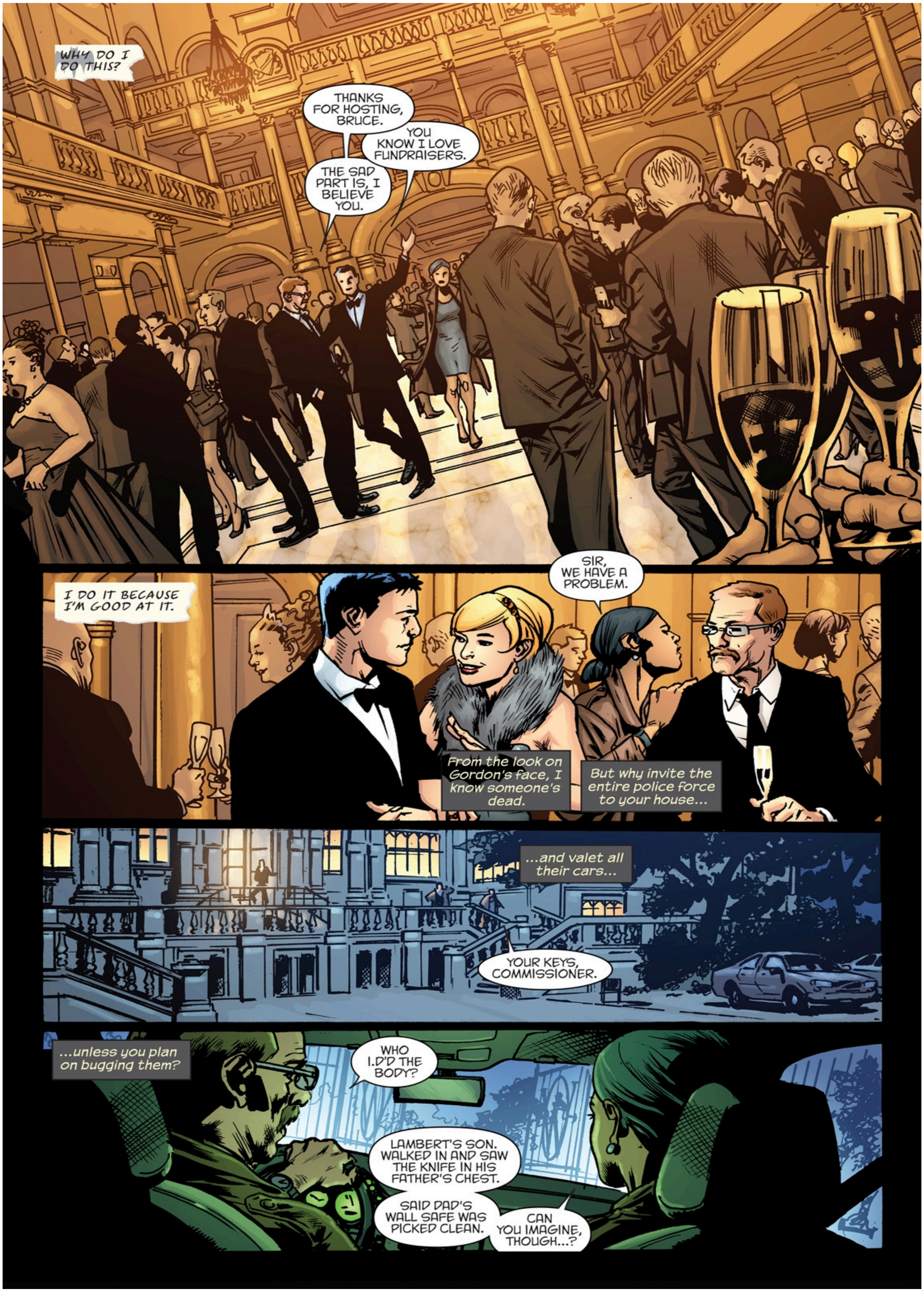

HOWEVER STRYKER HAS NOT NOTICED THE "BAT-MAN" WHO HAS SECLUDED HIMSELF IN THE SHADOWS...
SO HE DIDN'T GET YOU AFTER ALL... WELL I'LL FINISH YOU AND THEN THROW YOUR BODY IN THE ACID TANK, BELOW.
YOU ?

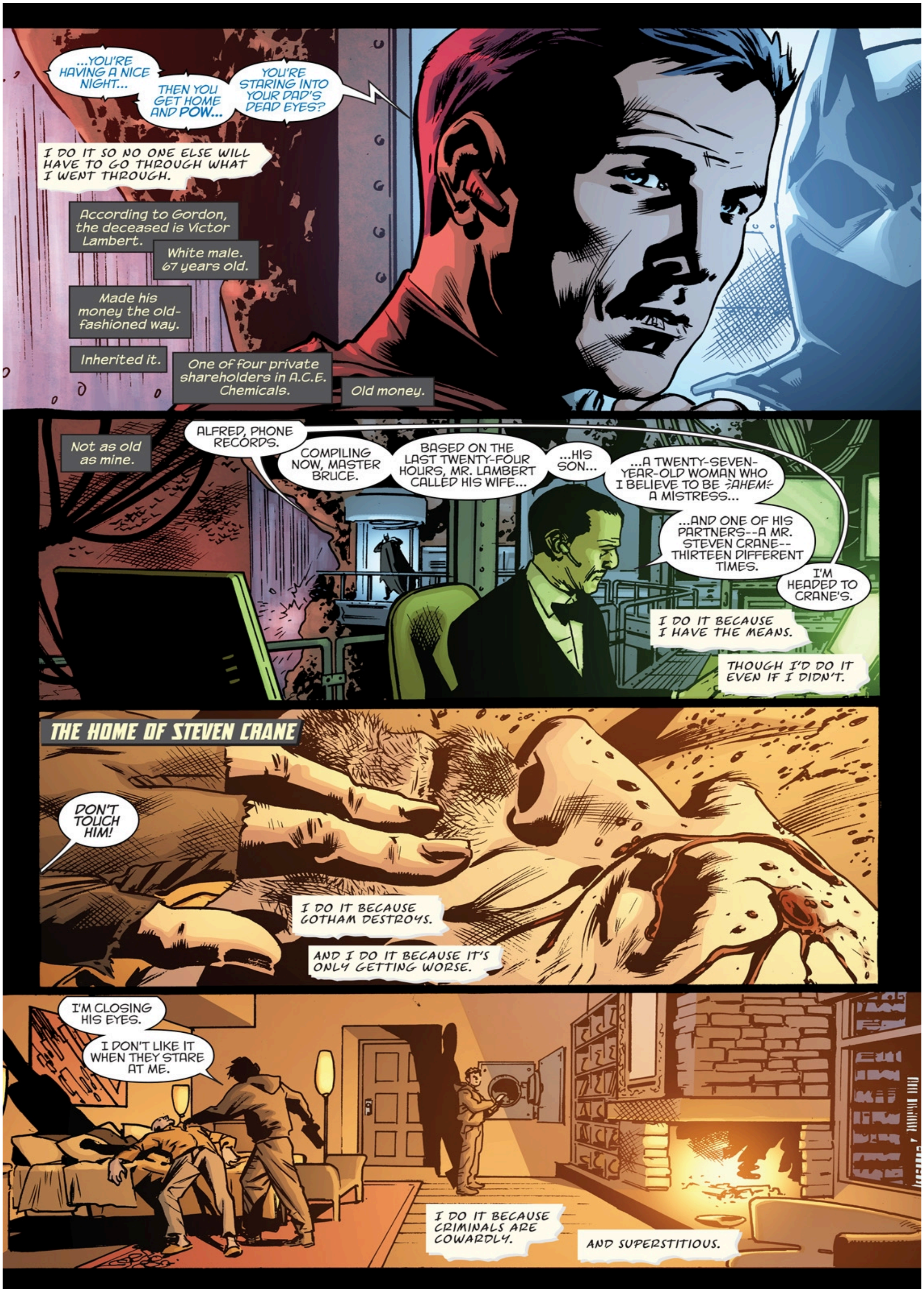

OHHH! MY HAND--

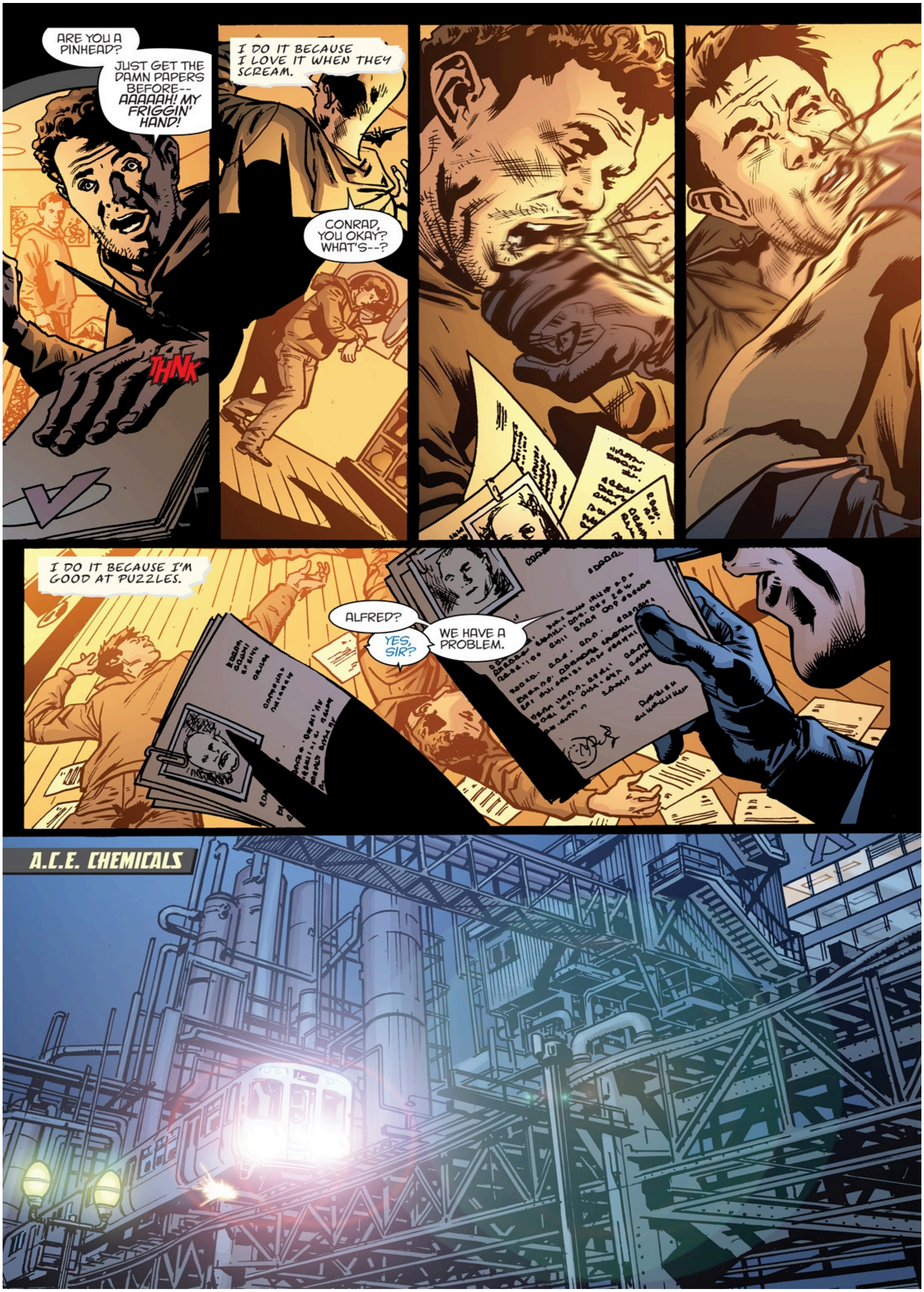

WHAT'S THE IDEA? WHY DID HE TRY TO KILL ME?
THIS RAT WAS BEHIND THE MURDERS! YOU SEE, I LEARNED THAT YOU, LAMBERT, CRANE AND STRYKER, WERE ONCE PARTNERS IN THE APEX CHEMICAL CORPORATION....

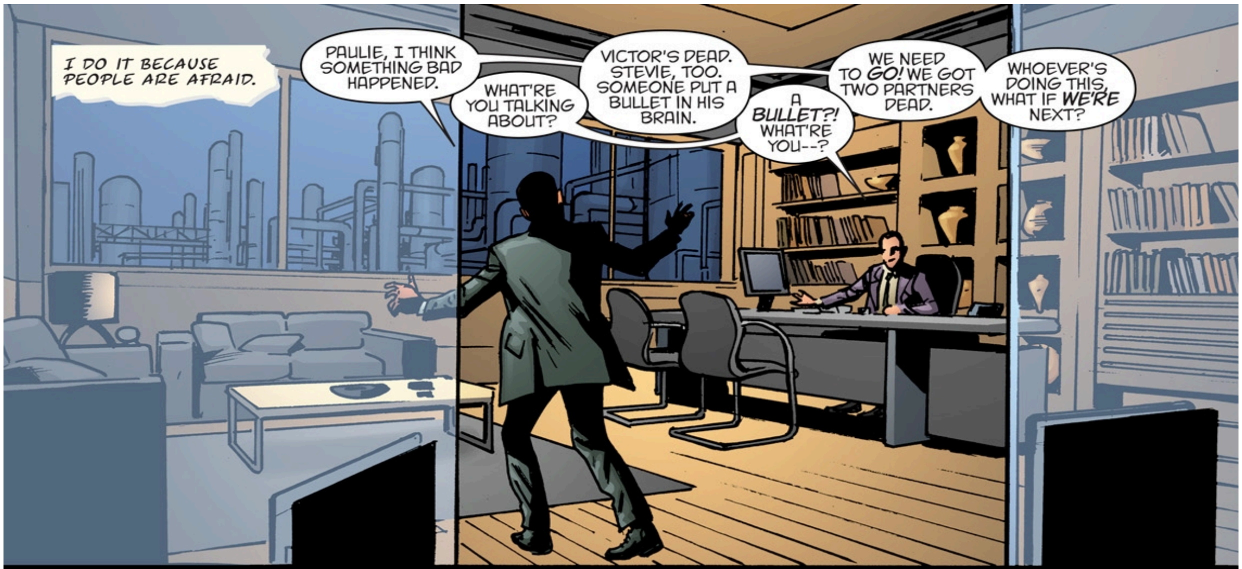

...STRYKER, WHO WISHED TO BE SOLE OWNER, BUT HAVING NO READY CASH, MADE SECRET CONTRACTS WITH YOU, TO PAY A CERTAIN SUM OF MONEY EACH YEAR UNTIL HE OWNED THE BUSINESS. HE FIGURED BY KILLING YOU AND STEALING THE CONTRACTS, HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY THIS MONEY.

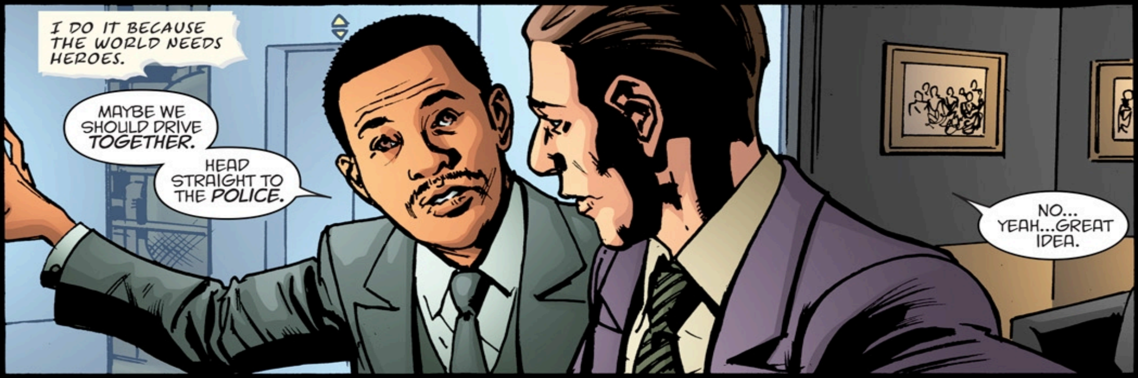

HMM, A VERY CLEVER SCHEME, AND BEING THE CONTRACTS WERE A STRICT SECRET BETWEEN THE FOUR OF US, OUR HEIRS OR THE OUTSIDE WORLD WOULDN'T KNOW A THING ABOUT THEM... BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW ALL THIS?
I SECURED THIS CONTRACT FROM ONE OF HIS HIRED KILLERS
... SUDDENLY, STRYKER, WITH THE STRENGTH OF A MAD MAN, TEARS HIMSELF FREE FROM THE GRASP OF THE BAT-MAN...
— SURE... I DID IT! BUT YOU WON'T SEND ME TO THE 'CHAIR' FOR IT!!! I'LL —
SOCK!
HE'S FALLING RIGHT INTO THE ACID TANK!
YA-AA-AAAAA.
A FITTING ENDING FOR HIS KIND.
... HOW CAN I EVER THANK YO... WHY— GONE!
THE NEXT DAY, YOUNG BRUCE WAYNE IS AGAIN A VISITOR AT THE COMMISSIONER'S HOUSE... WHO HAS JUST FINISHED TELLING BRUCE, THE LATEST EXPLOITS OF THE "BAT-MAN".
... AND THEN ROGERS SAID THE BAT-MAN WENT THROUGH THE SKYLIGHT!
HMM' A VERY LOVELY FAIRY-TALE COMMISSIONER. INDEED
AFTER BRUCE WAYNE HAS GONE...
... BRUCE WAYNE IS A NICE YOUNG CHAP- BUT HE CERTAINLY MUST LEAD A BORING LIFE... SEEMS DISINTERESTED IN EVERYTHING—
.. BRUCE WAYNE RETURNS HOME TO HIS ROOM... A LITTLE LATER HIS DOOR SLOWLY OPENS...
... AND REVEALS ITS OCCUPANT... IF THE COMMISSIONER COULD SEE HIS YOUNG FRIEND NOW... HE'D BE AMAZED TO LEARN THAT HE IS THE "BAT-MAN!"
Rob't Kane
FINIS
WATCH FOR A NEW THRILLING 'BAT-MAN' STORY...
NEXT MONTH

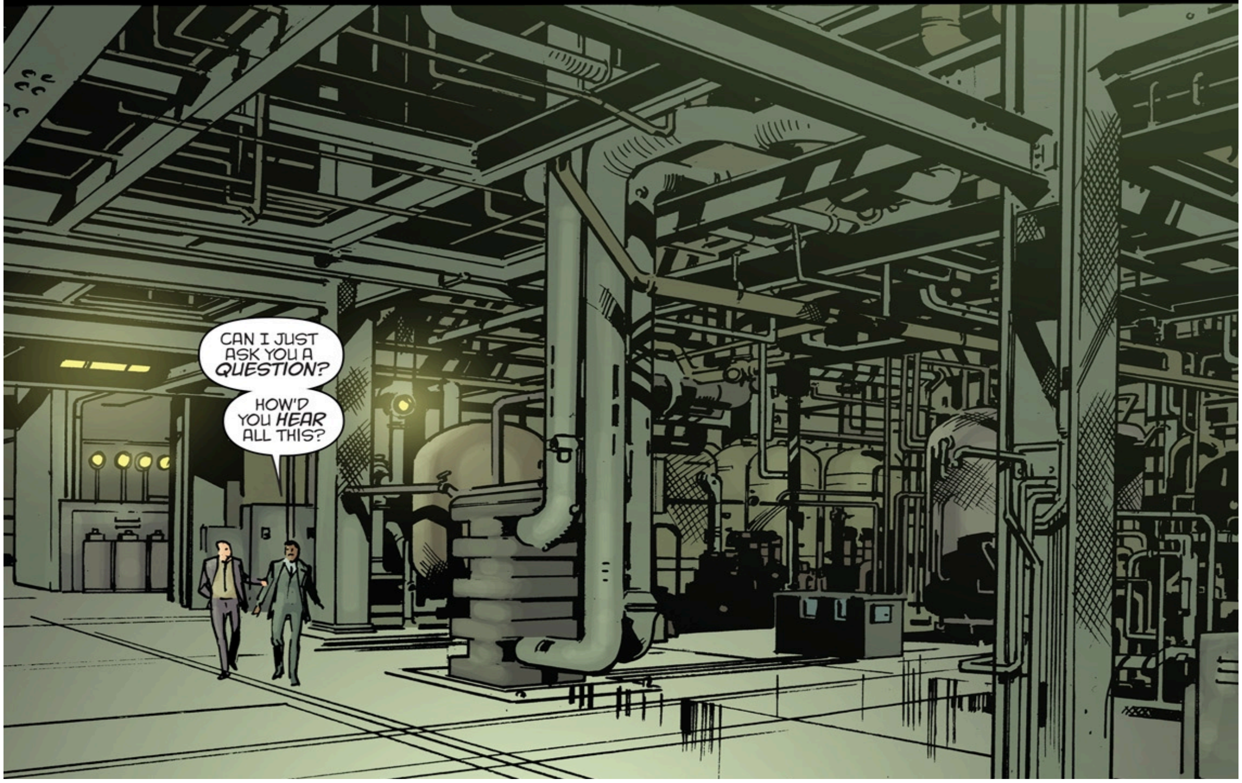

WHY DO I DO THIS?
THANKS FOR HOSTING, BRUCE.
YOU KNOW I LOVE FUNDRAISERS.
THE SAD PART IS, I BELIEVE YOU.
I DO IT BECAUSE I'M GOOD AT IT.
SIR, WE HAVE A PROBLEM.
From the look on Gordon's face, I know someone's dead.
But why invite the entire police force to your house...
...and valet all their cars...
YOUR KEYS, COMMISSIONER.
...unless you plan on bugging them?
WHO I.D'D THE BODY?
LAMBERT'S SON. WALKED IN AND SAW THE KNIFE IN HIS FATHER'S CHEST.
SAID DAD'S WALL SAFE WAS PICKED CLEAN.
CAN YOU IMAGINE, THOUGH...?

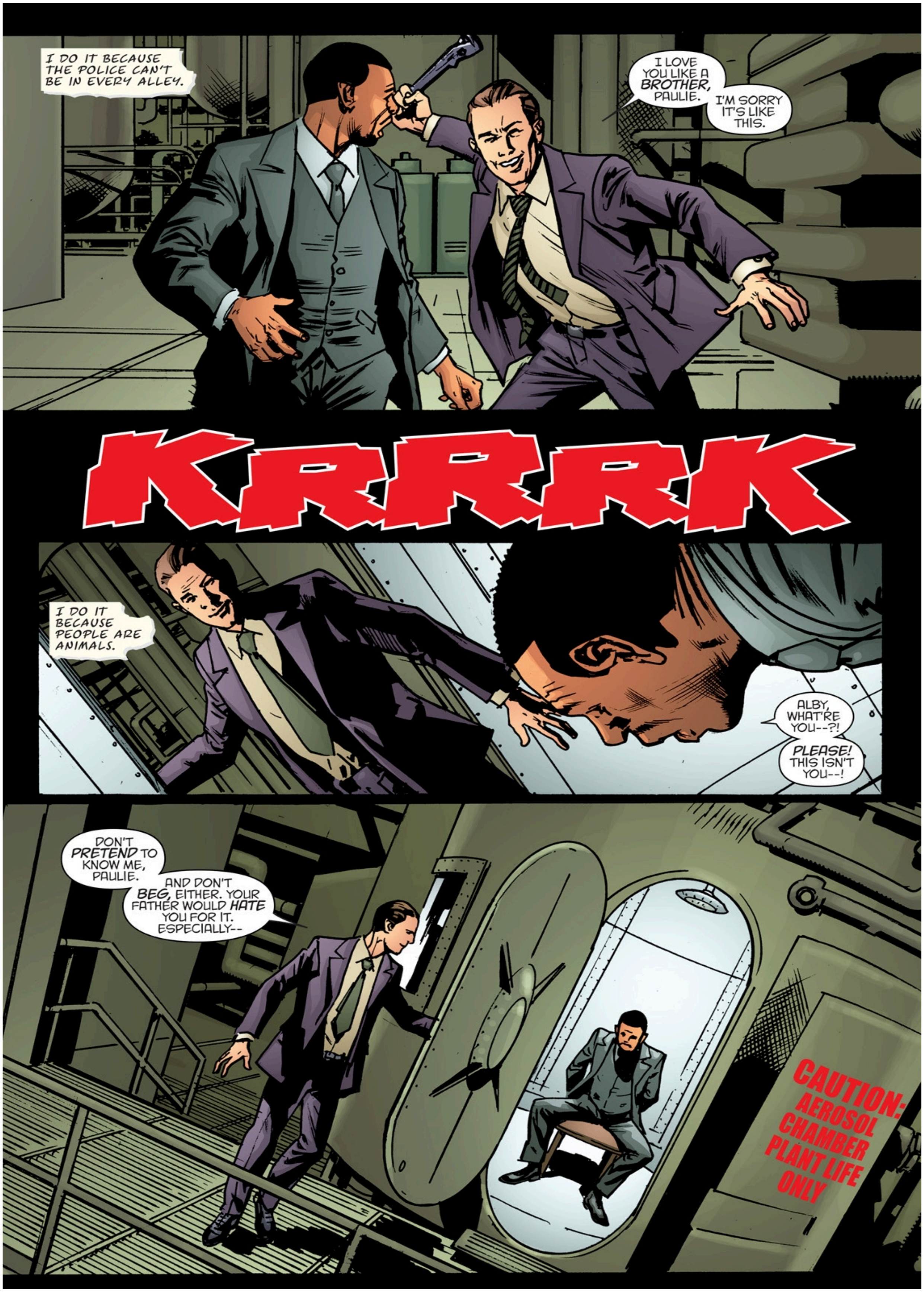

...YOU'RE HAVING A NICE NIGHT...
THEN YOU GET HOME AND POW...
YOU'RE STARING INTO YOUR DAD'S DEAD EYES?
I DO IT SO NO ONE ELSE WILL HAVE TO GO THROUGH WHAT I WENT THROUGH.
According to Gordon, the deceased is Victor Lambert.
White male. 67 years old.
Made his money the old-fashioned way.
Inherited it.
One of four private shareholders in A.C.E. Chemicals.
Old money.
Not as old as mine.
ALFRED, PHONE RECORDS.
COMPILING NOW, MASTER BRUCE.
BASED ON THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, MR. LAMBERT CALLED HIS WIFE...
...HIS SON...
...A TWENTY-SEVEN-YEAR-OLD WOMAN WHO I BELIEVE TO BE ≈AHEM≈ A MISTRESS...
...AND ONE OF HIS PARTNERS--A MR. STEVEN CRANE--THIRTEEN DIFFERENT TIMES.
I'M HEADED TO CRANE'S.
I DO IT BECAUSE I HAVE THE MEANS.
THOUGH I'D DO IT EVEN IF I DIDN'T.
THE HOME OF STEVEN CRANE
DON'T TOUCH HIM!
I DO IT BECAUSE GOTHAM DESTROYS.
AND I DO IT BECAUSE IT'S ONLY GETTING WORSE.
I'M CLOSING HIS EYES.
I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN THEY STARE AT ME.
I DO IT BECAUSE CRIMINALS ARE COWARDLY.
AND SUPERSTITIOUS.

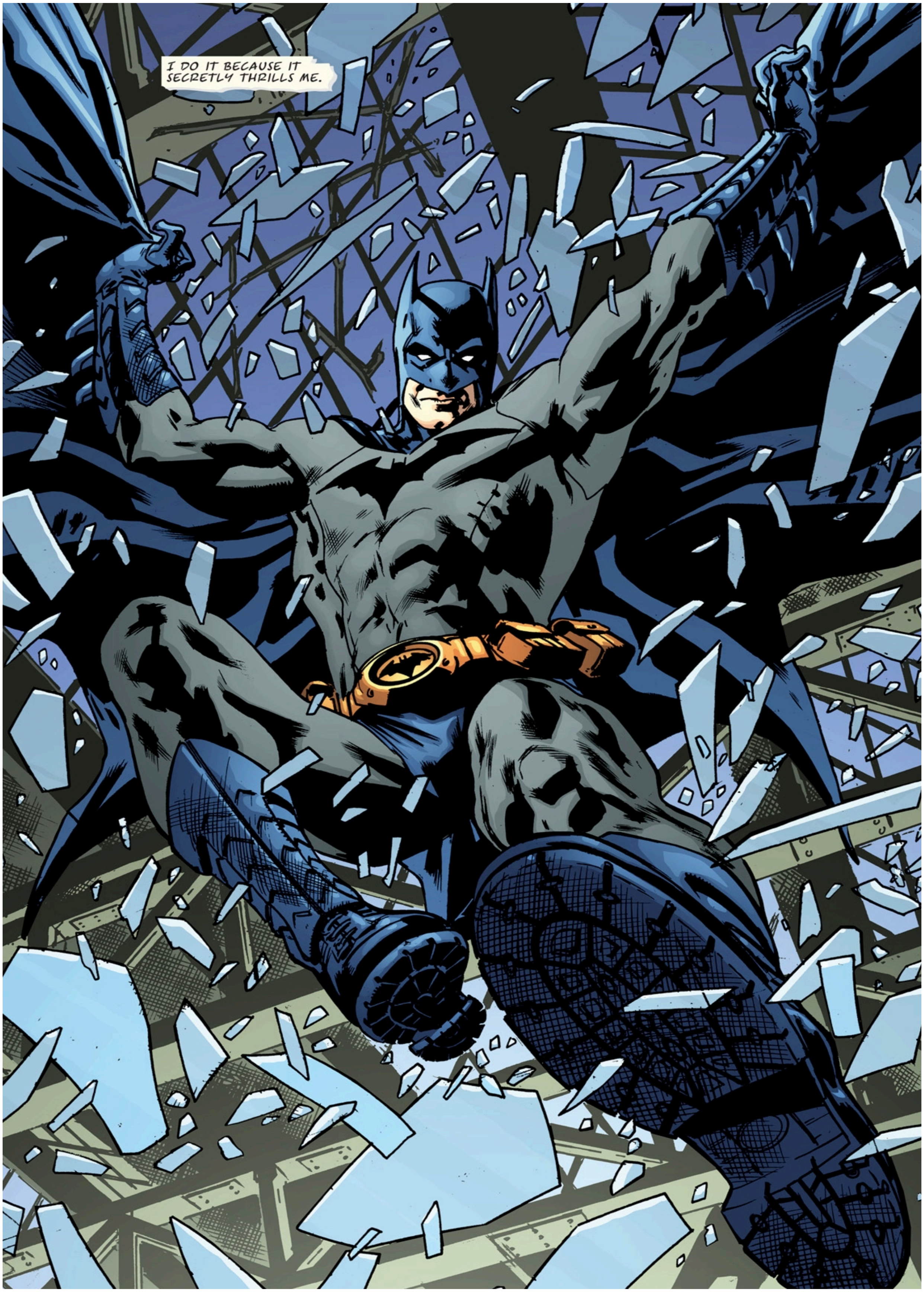

ARE YOU A PINHEAD?
JUST GET THE DAMN PAPERS BEFORE-- AAAAAH! MY FRIGGIN' HAND!
THNK
I DO IT BECAUSE I LOVE IT WHEN THEY SCREAM.
CONRAD, YOU OKAY? WHAT'S--?
I DO IT BECAUSE I'M GOOD AT PUZZLES.
ALFRED?
YES, SIR?
WE HAVE A PROBLEM.
A.C.E. CHEMICALS

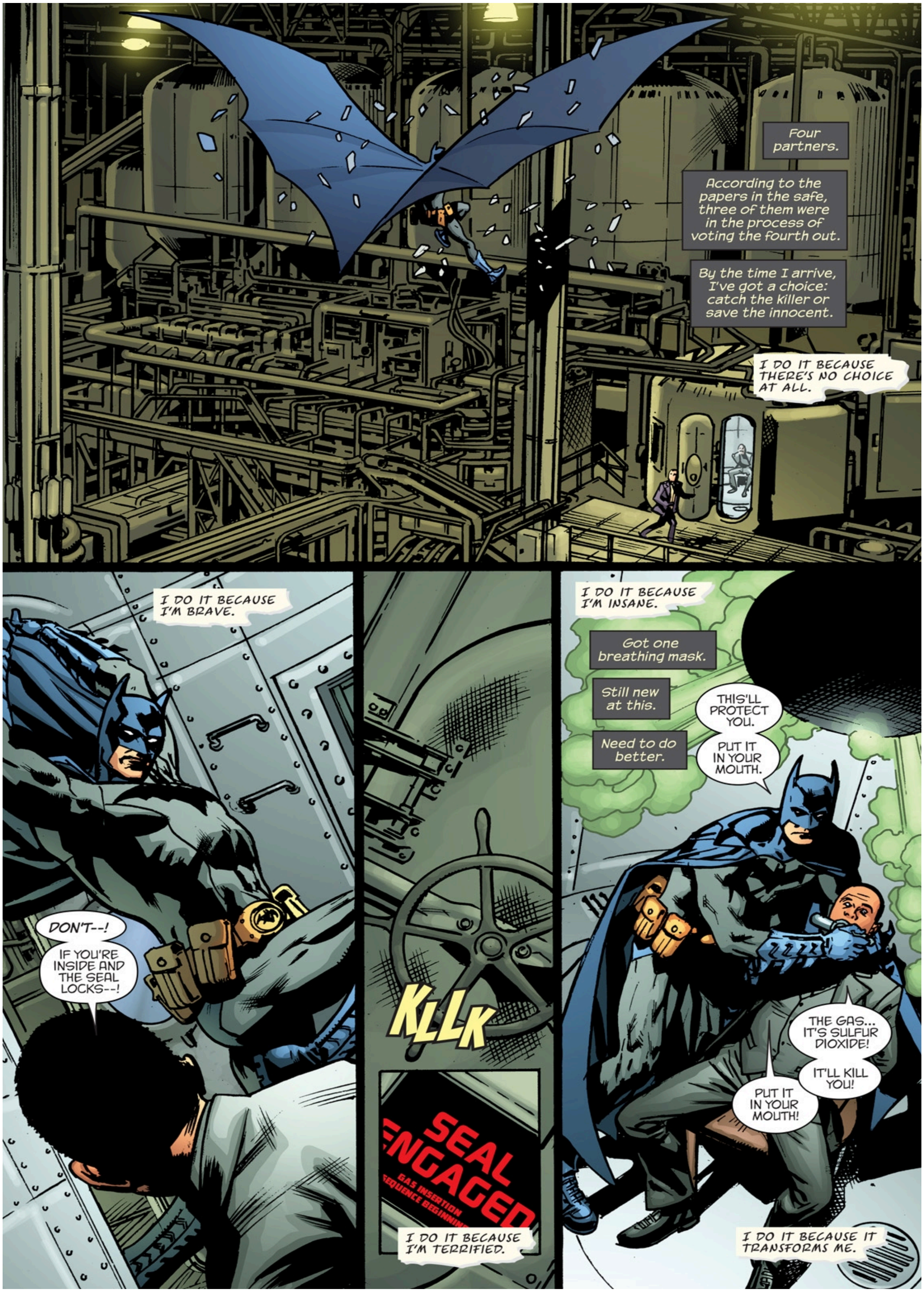

I DO IT BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE AFRAID.
PAULIE, I THINK SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
VICTOR'S DEAD. STEVIE, TOO. SOMEONE PUT A BULLET IN HIS BRAIN.
A BULLET?! WHAT'RE YOU--?
WE NEED TO GO! WE GOT TWO PARTNERS DEAD.
WHOEVER'S DOING THIS, WHAT IF WE'RE NEXT?

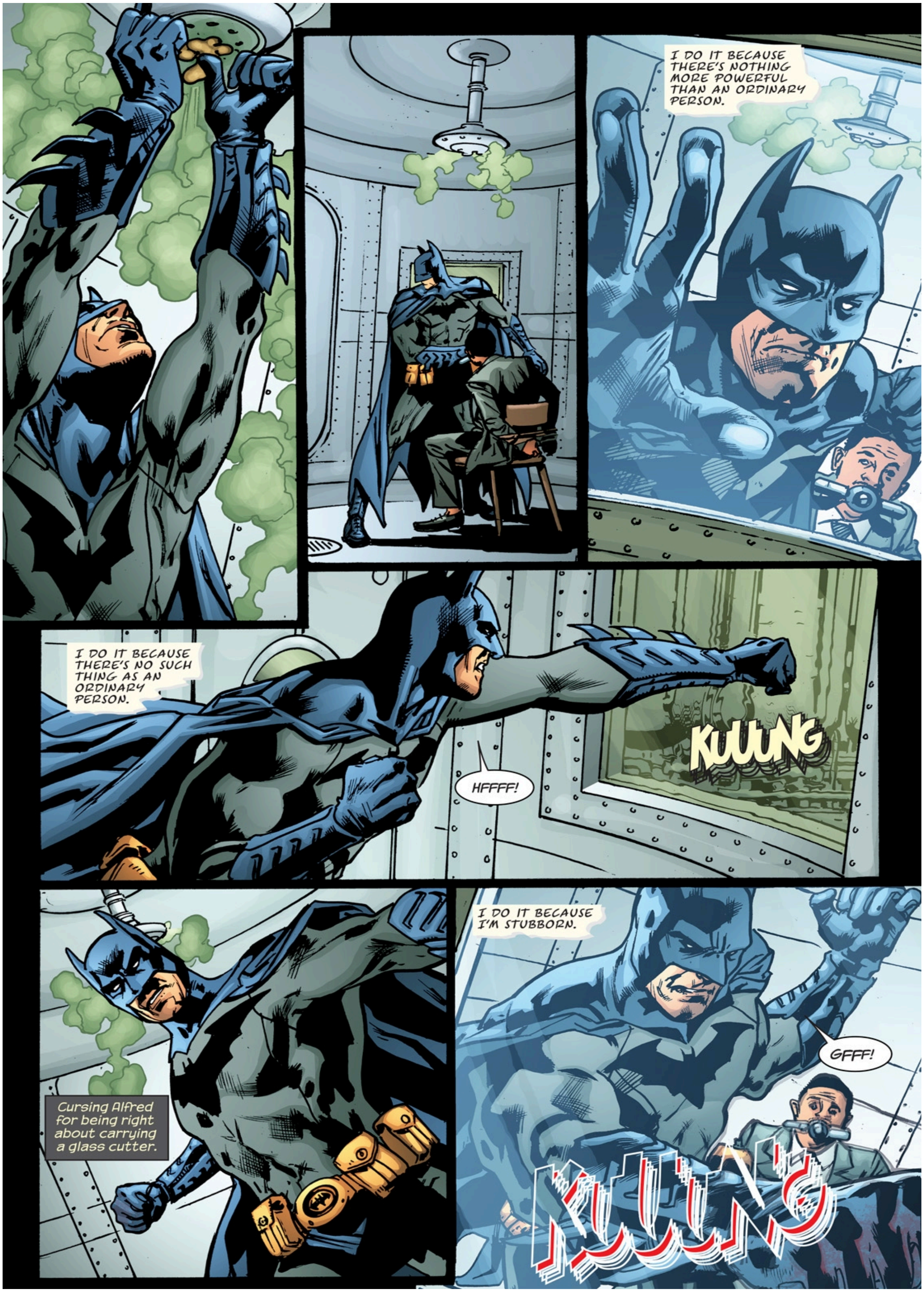

I DO IT BECAUSE THE WORLD NEEDS HEROES.
MAYBE WE SHOULD DRIVE TOGETHER.
HEAD STRAIGHT TO THE POLICE.
NO... YEAH...GREAT IDEA.

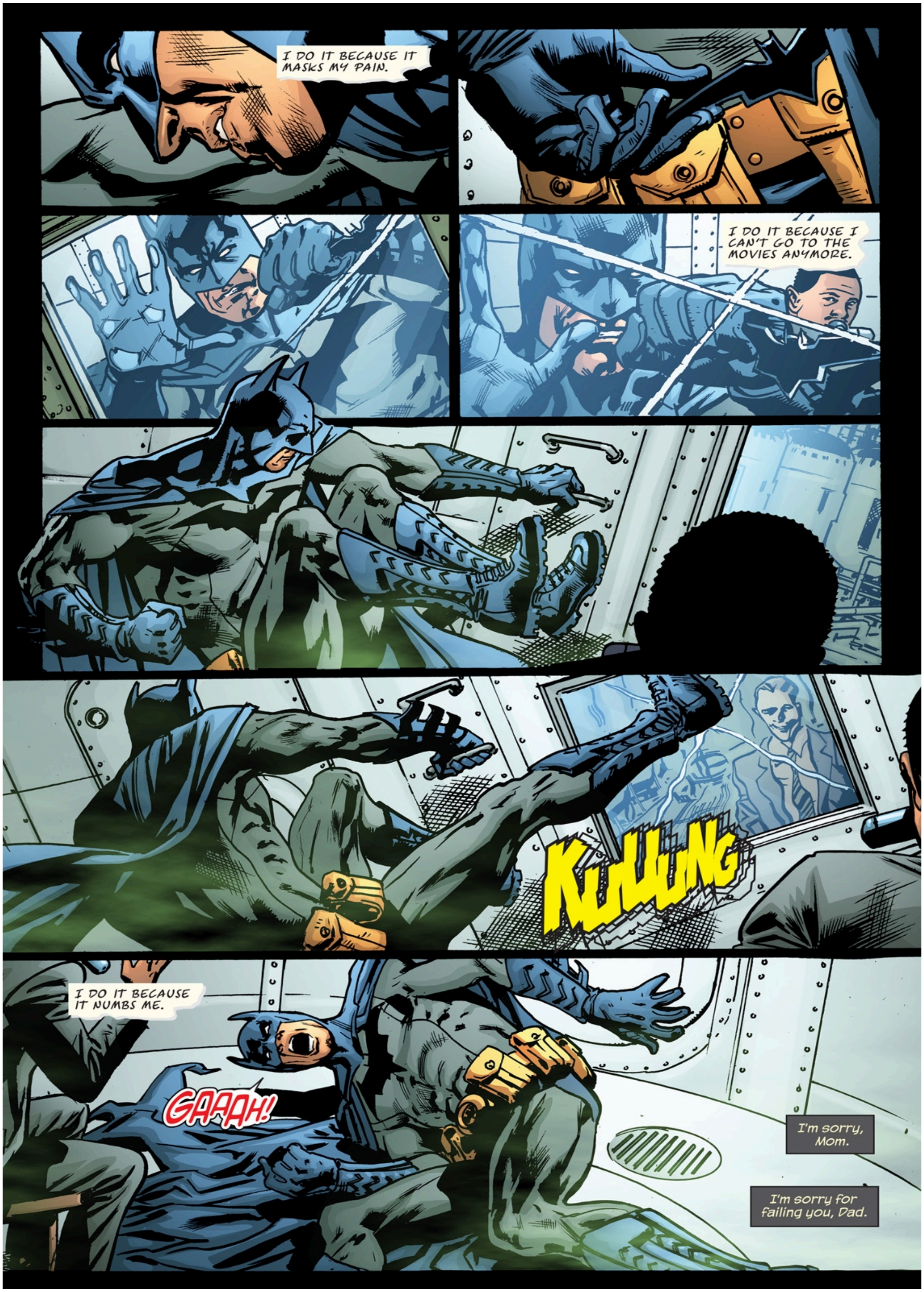

CAN I JUST ASK YOU A QUESTION?
HOW'D YOU HEAR ALL THIS?

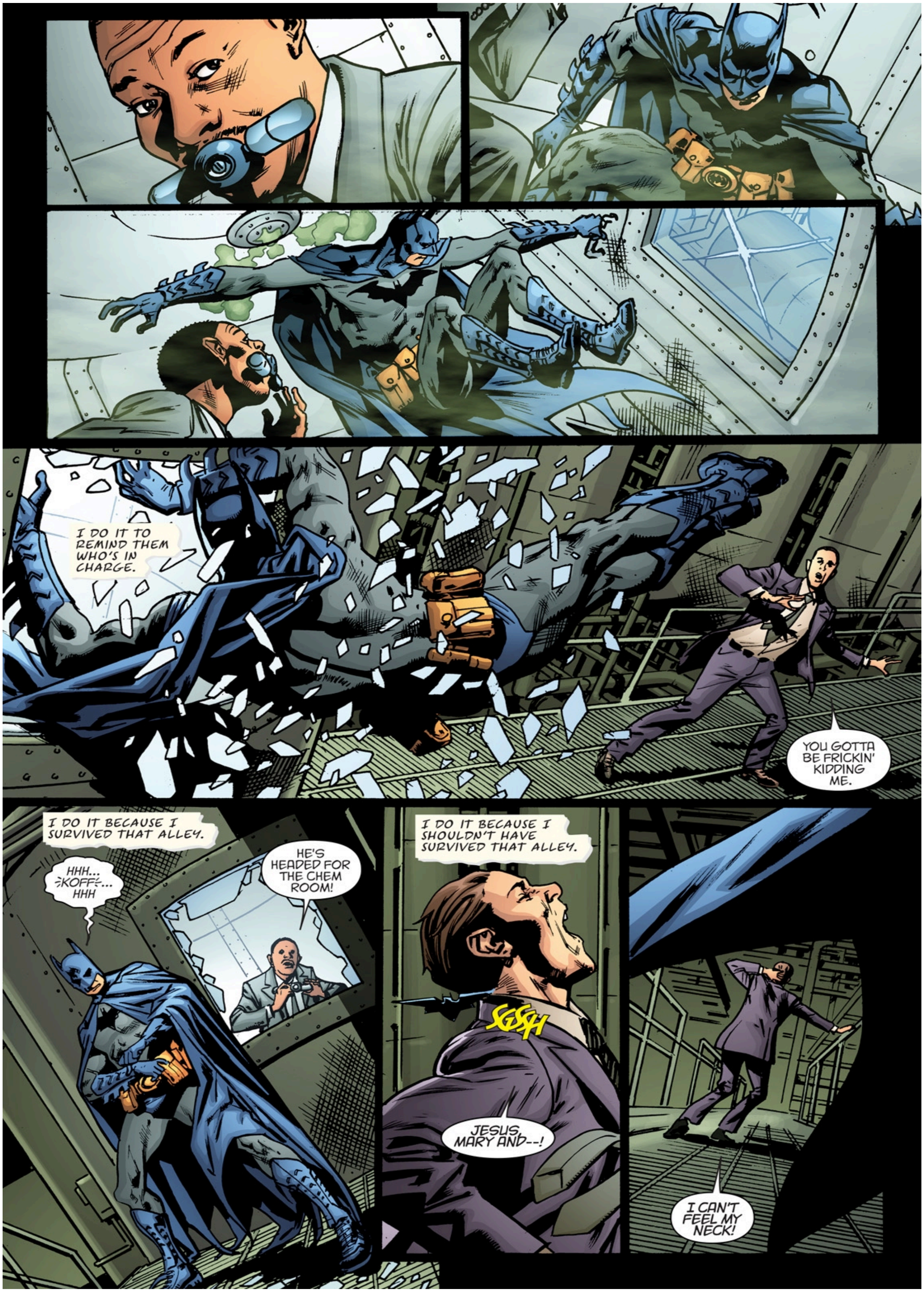

I DO IT BECAUSE THE POLICE CAN'T BE IN EVERY ALLEY.
I LOVE YOU LIKE A **BROTHER,** PAULIE.
I'M SORRY IT'S LIKE THIS.
KRRRK
I DO IT BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS.
ALBY, WHAT'RE YOU--?!
PLEASE! THIS ISN'T YOU--!
DON'T ***PRETEND*** TO KNOW ME, PAULIE.
AND DON'T ***BEG,*** EITHER. YOUR FATHER WOULD ***HATE*** YOU FOR IT. ESPECIALLY--
CAUTION: AEROSOL CHAMBER PLANT LIFE ONLY

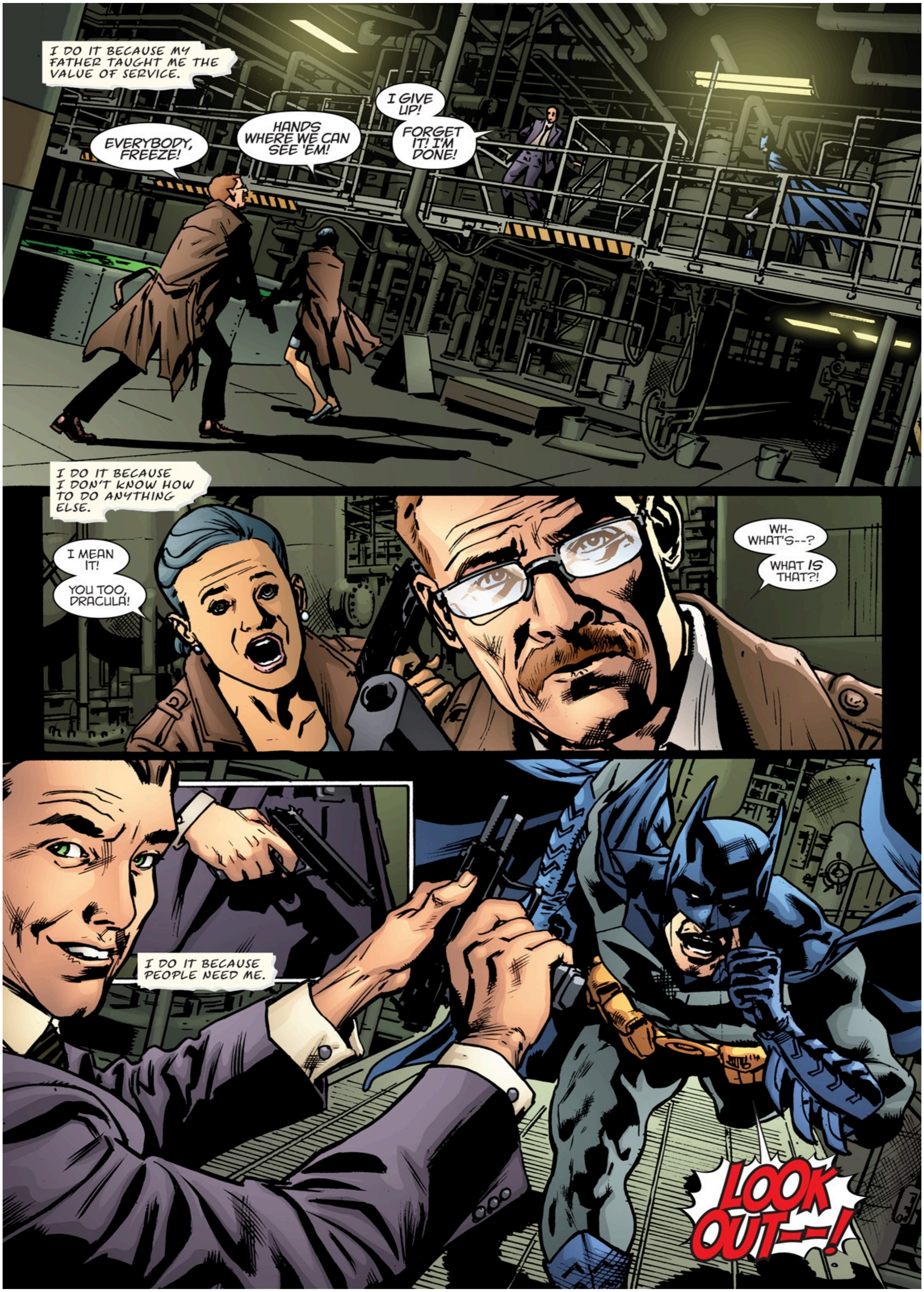

I DO IT BECAUSE IT SECRETLY THRILLS ME.


Four partners.
According to the papers in the safe, three of them were in the process of voting the fourth out.
By the time I arrive, I've got a choice: catch the killer or save the innocent.
I DO IT BECAUSE THERE'S NO CHOICE AT ALL.
I DO IT BECAUSE I'M BRAVE.
DON'T--!
IF YOU'RE INSIDE AND THE SEAL LOCKS--!
KLLK
SEAL ENGAGED
GAS INSERTION
SEQUENCE BEGINNIN
I DO IT BECAUSE I'M TERRIFIED.
I DO IT BECAUSE I'M INSANE.
Got one breathing mask.
Still new at this.
Need to do better.
THIS'LL PROTECT YOU.
PUT IT IN YOUR MOUTH.
THE GAS... IT'S SULFUR DIOXIDE!
IT'LL KILL YOU!
PUT IT IN YOUR MOUTH!
I DO IT BECAUSE IT TRANSFORMS ME.

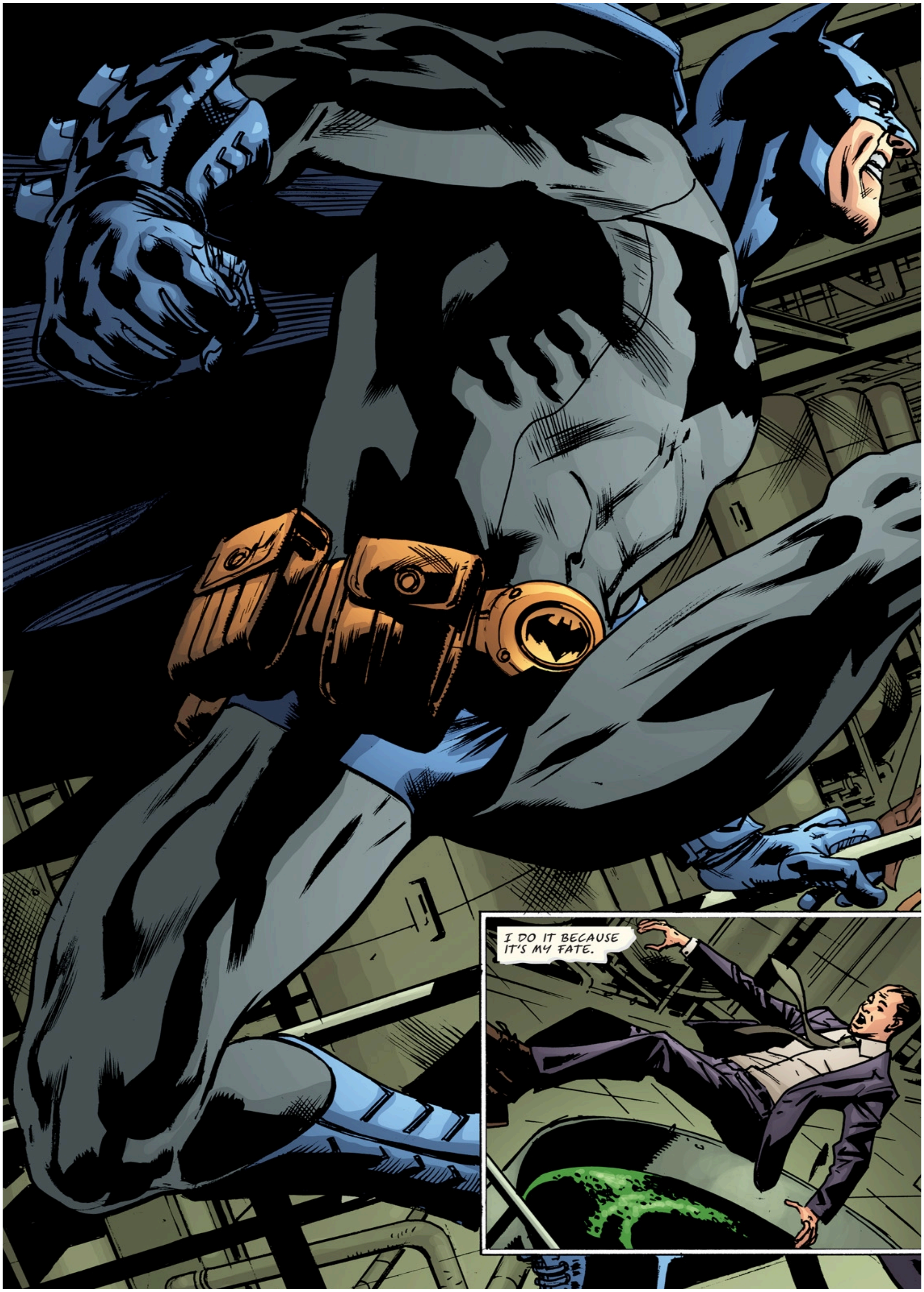

I DO IT BECAUSE THERE'S NOTHING MORE POWERFUL THAN AN ORDINARY PERSON.
I DO IT BECAUSE THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS AN ORDINARY PERSON.
HFFFF!
KUUUNG
Cursing Alfred for being right about carrying a glass cutter.
I DO IT BECAUSE I'M STUBBORN.
GFFF!
KUUUNG

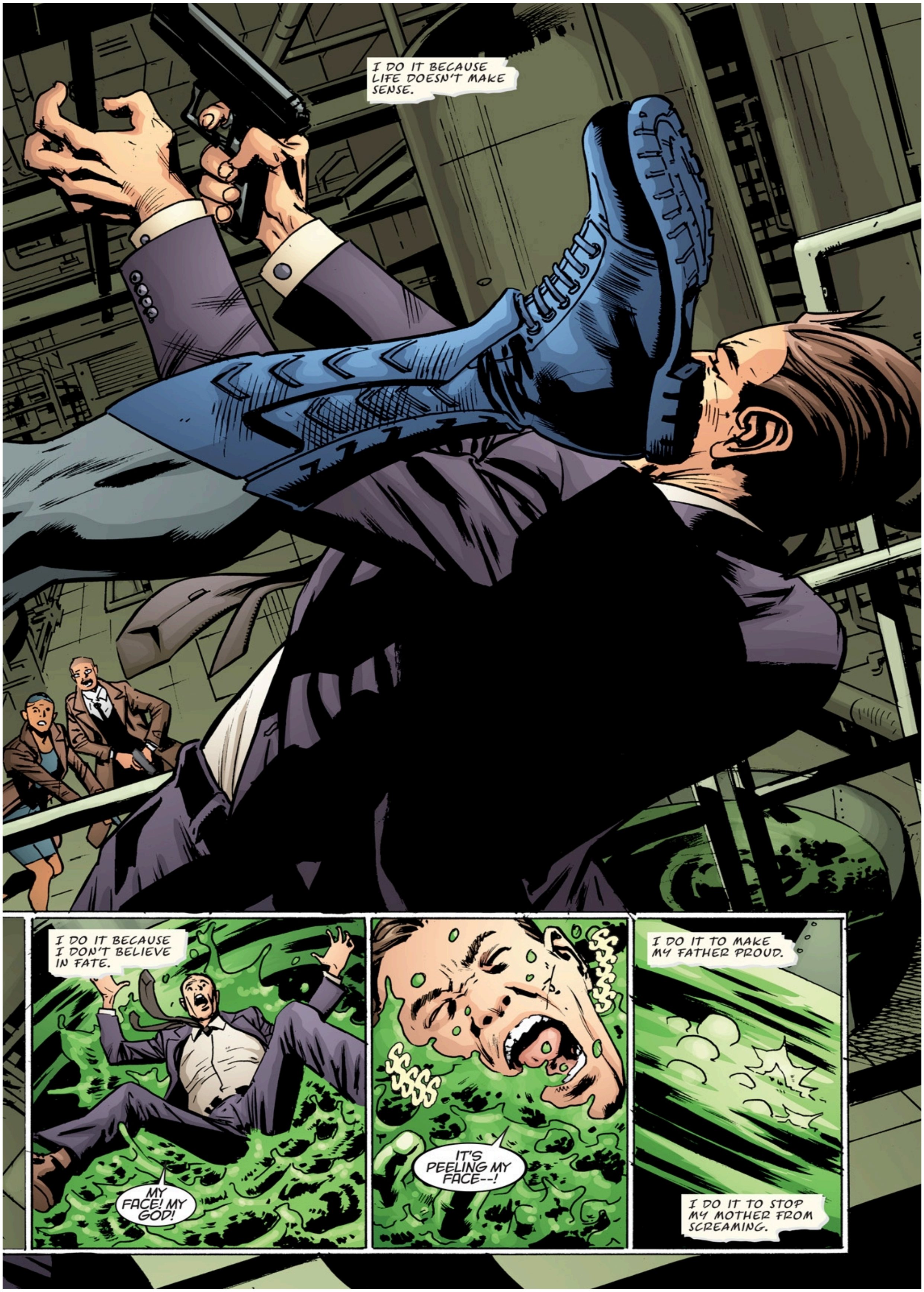

I DO IT BECAUSE IT MASKS MY PAIN.
I DO IT BECAUSE I CAN'T GO TO THE MOVIES ANYMORE.
KLUUUNG
I DO IT BECAUSE IT NUMBS ME.
GAAAH!
I'm sorry, Mom.
I'm sorry for failing you, Dad.

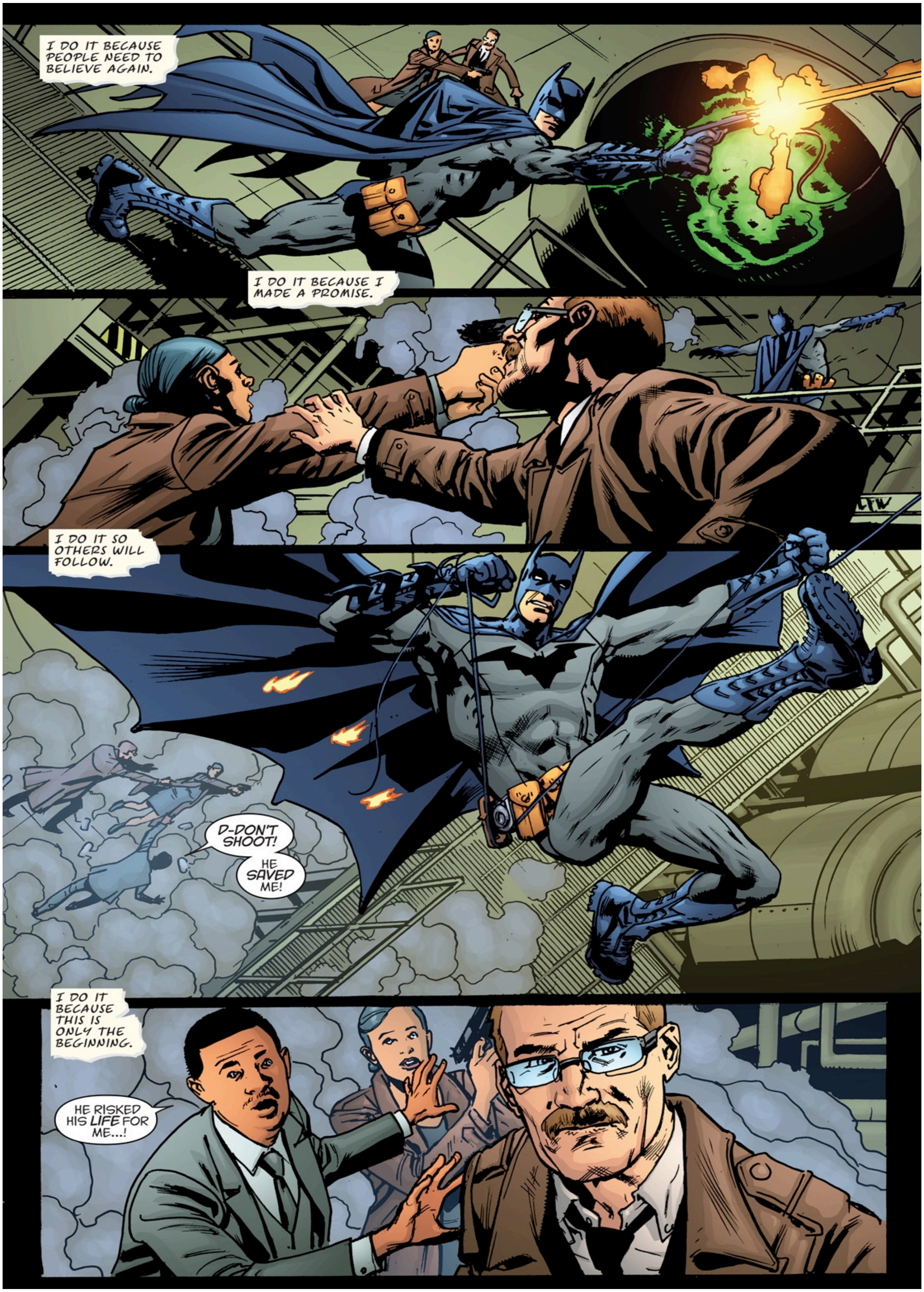

I DO IT TO REMIND THEM WHO'S IN CHARGE.
YOU GOTTA BE FRICKIN' KIDDING ME.
I DO IT BECAUSE I SURVIVED THAT ALLEY.
HHH... KOFF... HHH
HE'S HEADED FOR THE CHEM ROOM!
I DO IT BECAUSE I SHOULDN'T HAVE SURVIVED THAT ALLEY.
SGSH
JESUS, MARY AND--!
I CAN'T FEEL MY NECK!

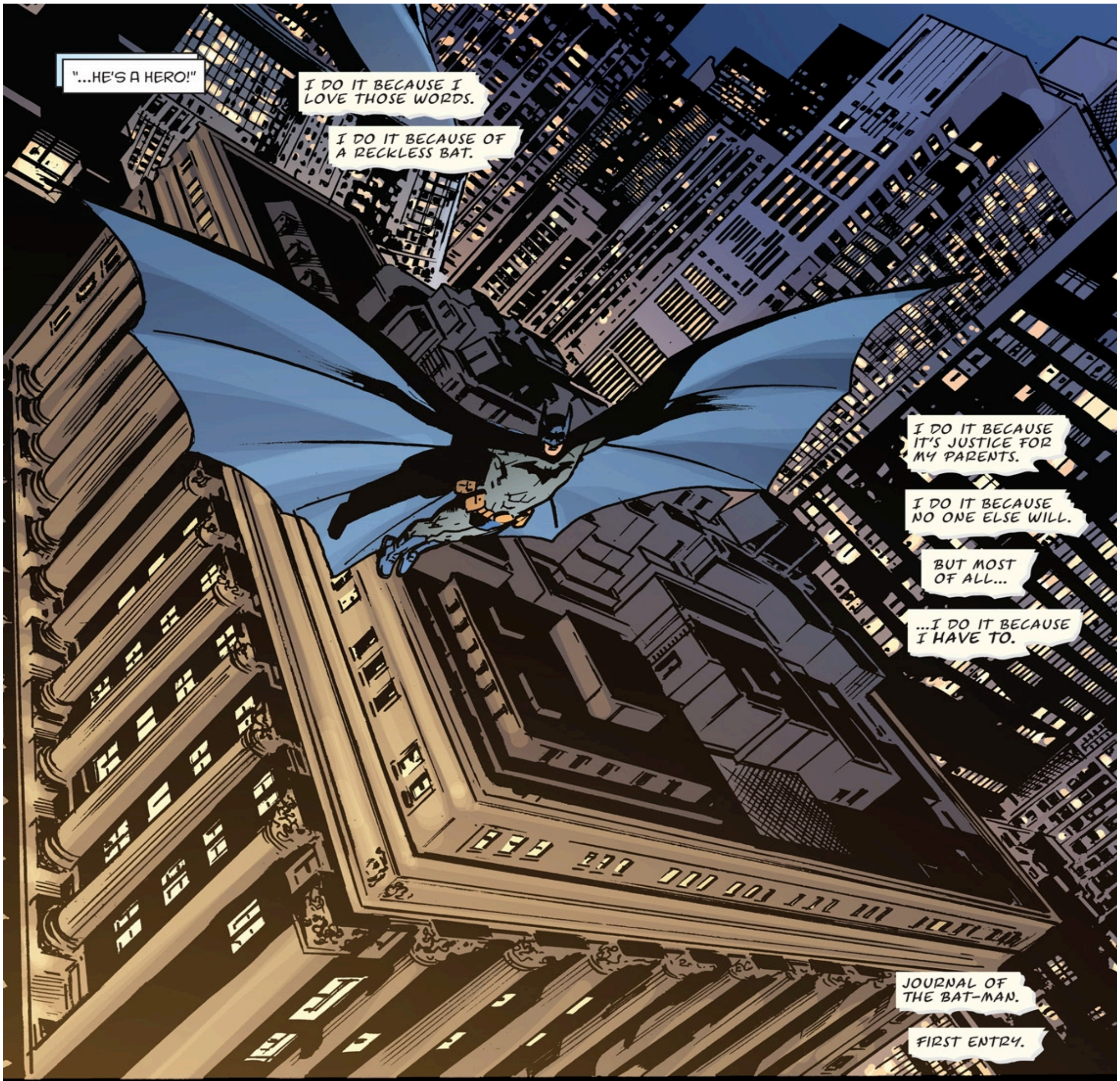

I DO IT BECAUSE MY FATHER TAUGHT ME THE VALUE OF SERVICE.
EVERYBODY, FREEZE!
HANDS WHERE WE CAN SEE 'EM!
I GIVE UP!
FORGET IT! I'M DONE!
I DO IT BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DO ANYTHING ELSE.
I MEAN IT!
YOU TOO, DRACULA!
WH-WHAT'S--?
WHAT *IS* THAT?!
I DO IT BECAUSE PEOPLE NEED ME.
LOOK OUT--!

[redacted]


I DO IT BECAUSE IT'S MY FATE.


I DO IT BECAUSE LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
I DO IT BECAUSE I DON'T BELIEVE IN FATE.
MY FACE! MY GOD!
SSSSS
SSSSS
IT'S PEELING MY FACE--!
I DO IT TO MAKE MY FATHER PROUD.
I DO IT TO STOP MY MOTHER FROM SCREAMING.

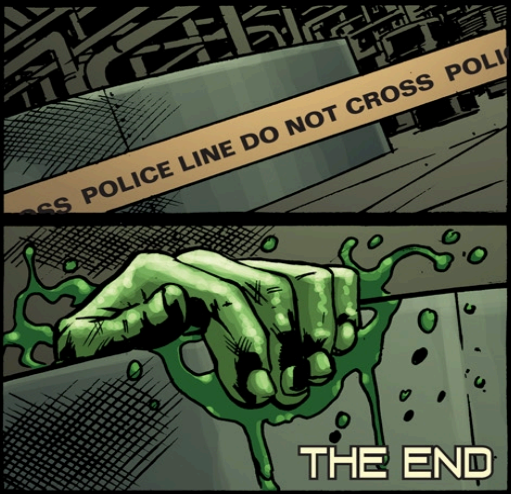

I DO IT BECAUSE PEOPLE NEED TO BELIEVE AGAIN.
I DO IT BECAUSE I MADE A PROMISE.
I DO IT SO OTHERS WILL FOLLOW.
D-DON'T SHOOT!
HE SAVED ME!
I DO IT BECAUSE THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.
HE RISKED HIS LIFE FOR ME...!

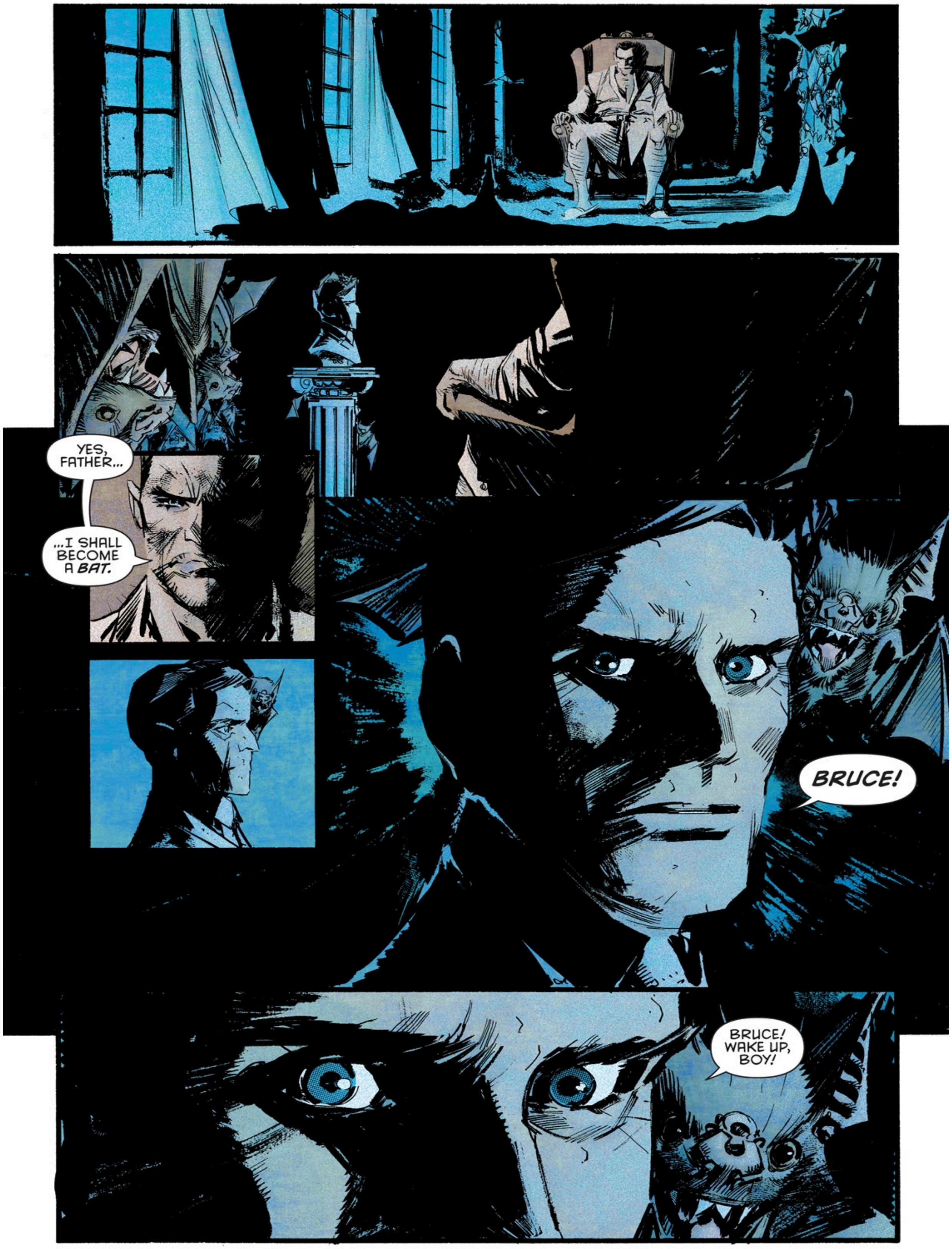

"...HE'S A HERO!"
I DO IT BECAUSE I LOVE THOSE WORDS.
I DO IT BECAUSE OF A RECKLESS BAT.
I DO IT BECAUSE IT'S JUSTICE FOR MY PARENTS.
I DO IT BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE WILL.
BUT MOST OF ALL...
...I DO IT BECAUSE I HAVE TO.
JOURNAL OF THE BAT-MAN.
FIRST ENTRY.

THE CASE OF THE CHEMICAL SYNDICATE

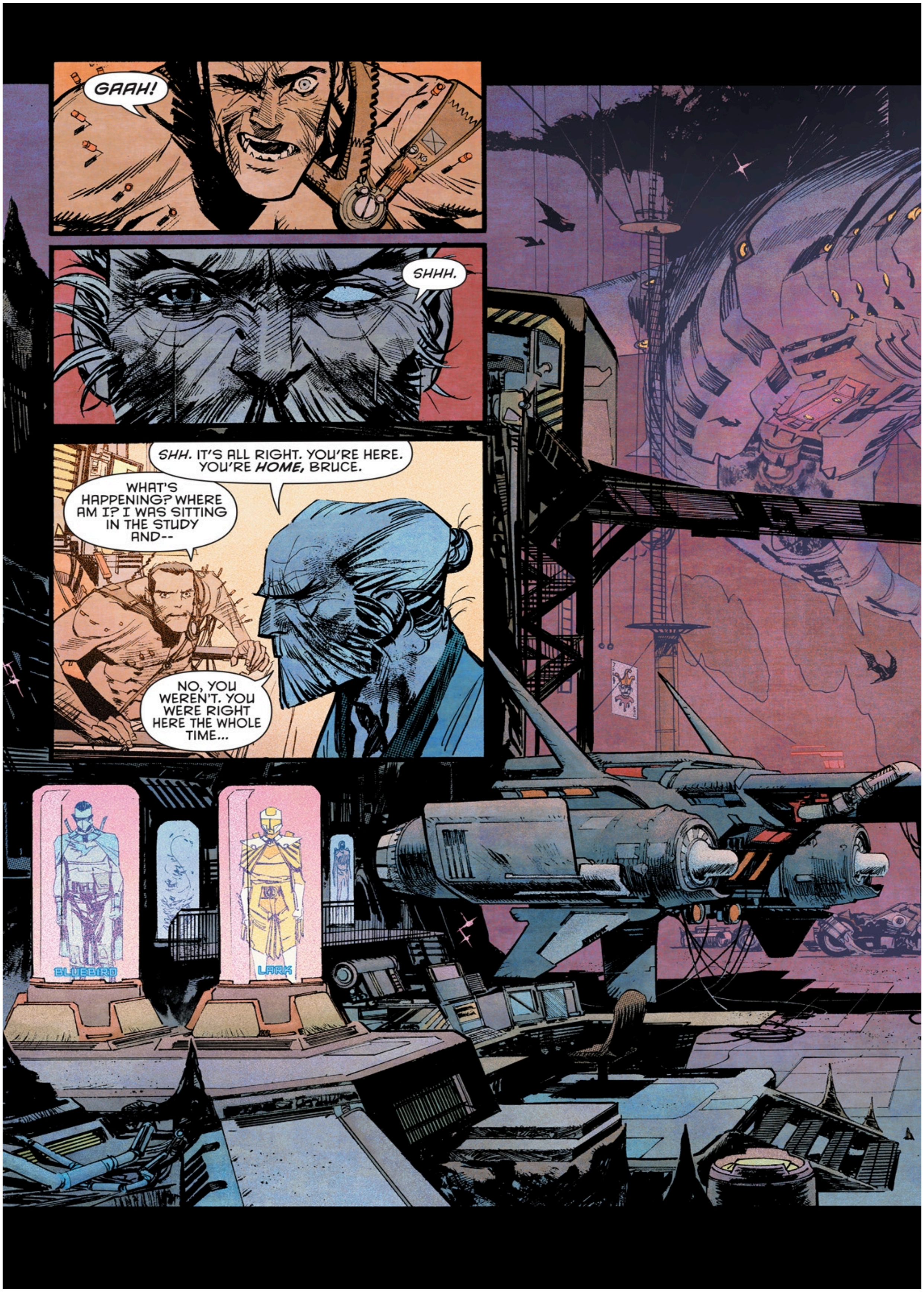
BRAD MELTZER WRITER
BRYAN HITCH ARTIST
DAVID BARON COLORIST
CHRIS ELIOPOULOS LETTERER

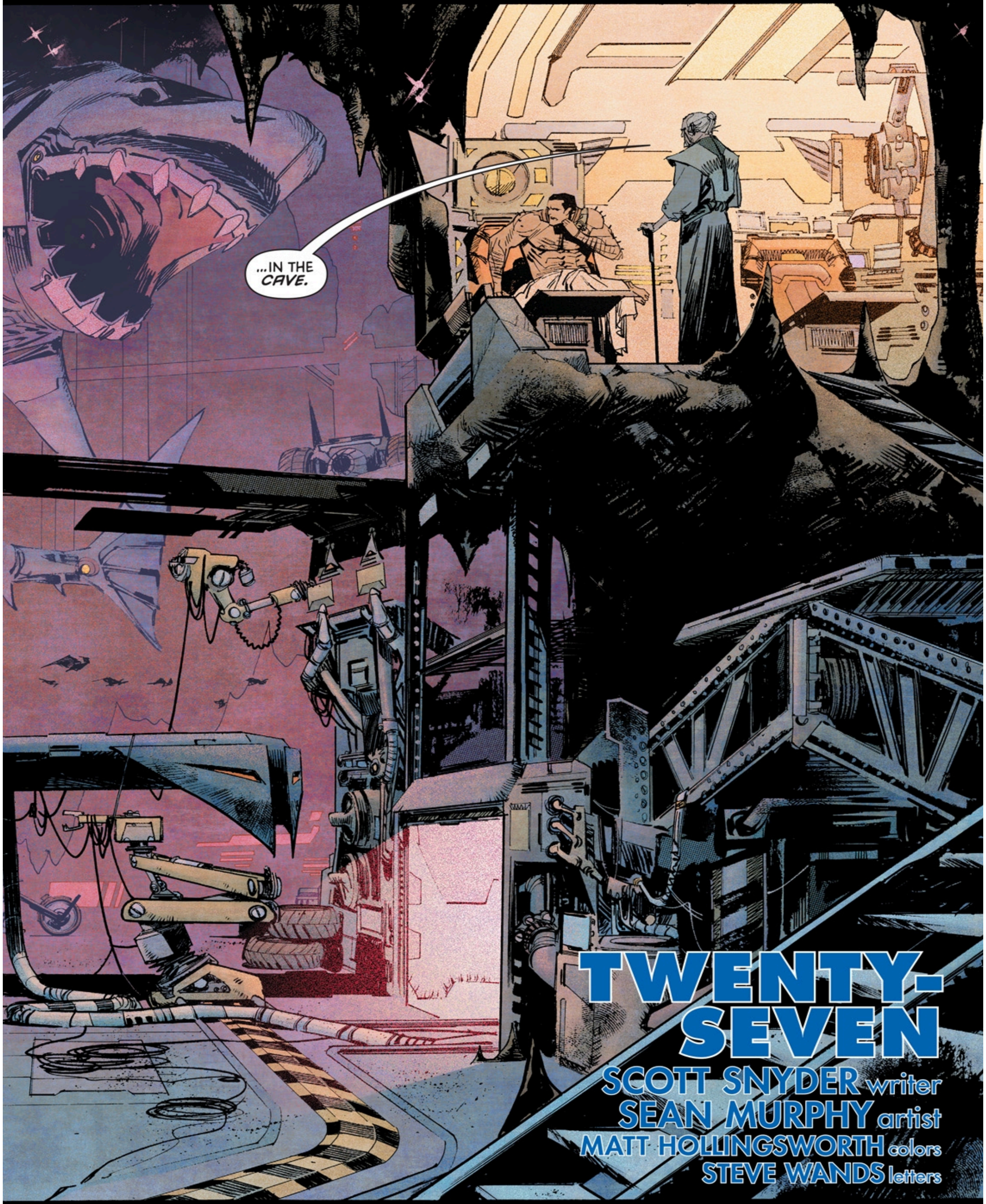
BASED ON THE
ORIGINAL STORY BY
BOB KANE AND BILL FINGER


POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLI
THE END


YES, FATHER...
...I SHALL BECOME A *BAT.*
BRUCE!
BRUCE! WAKE UP, BOY!

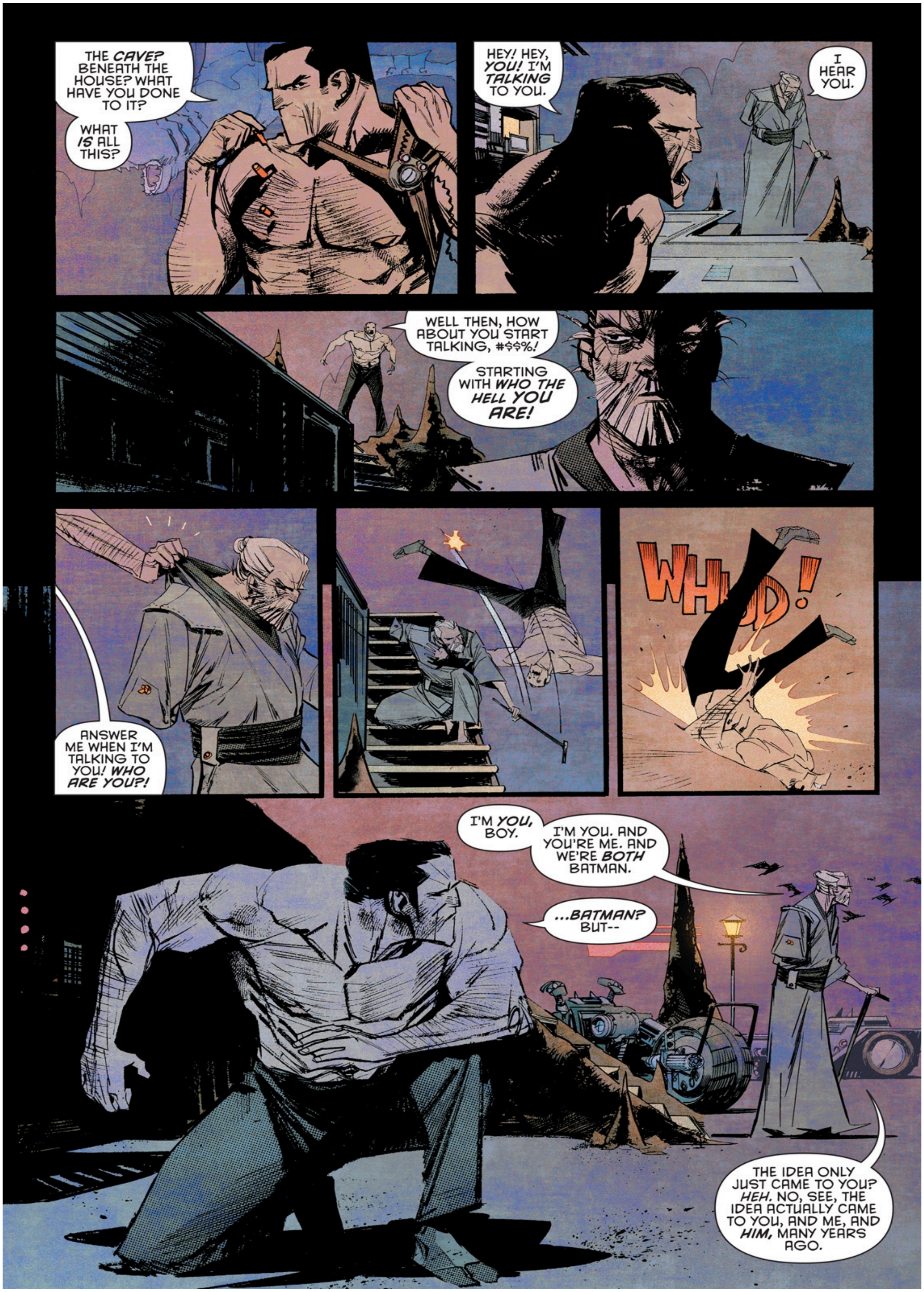
[redacted]

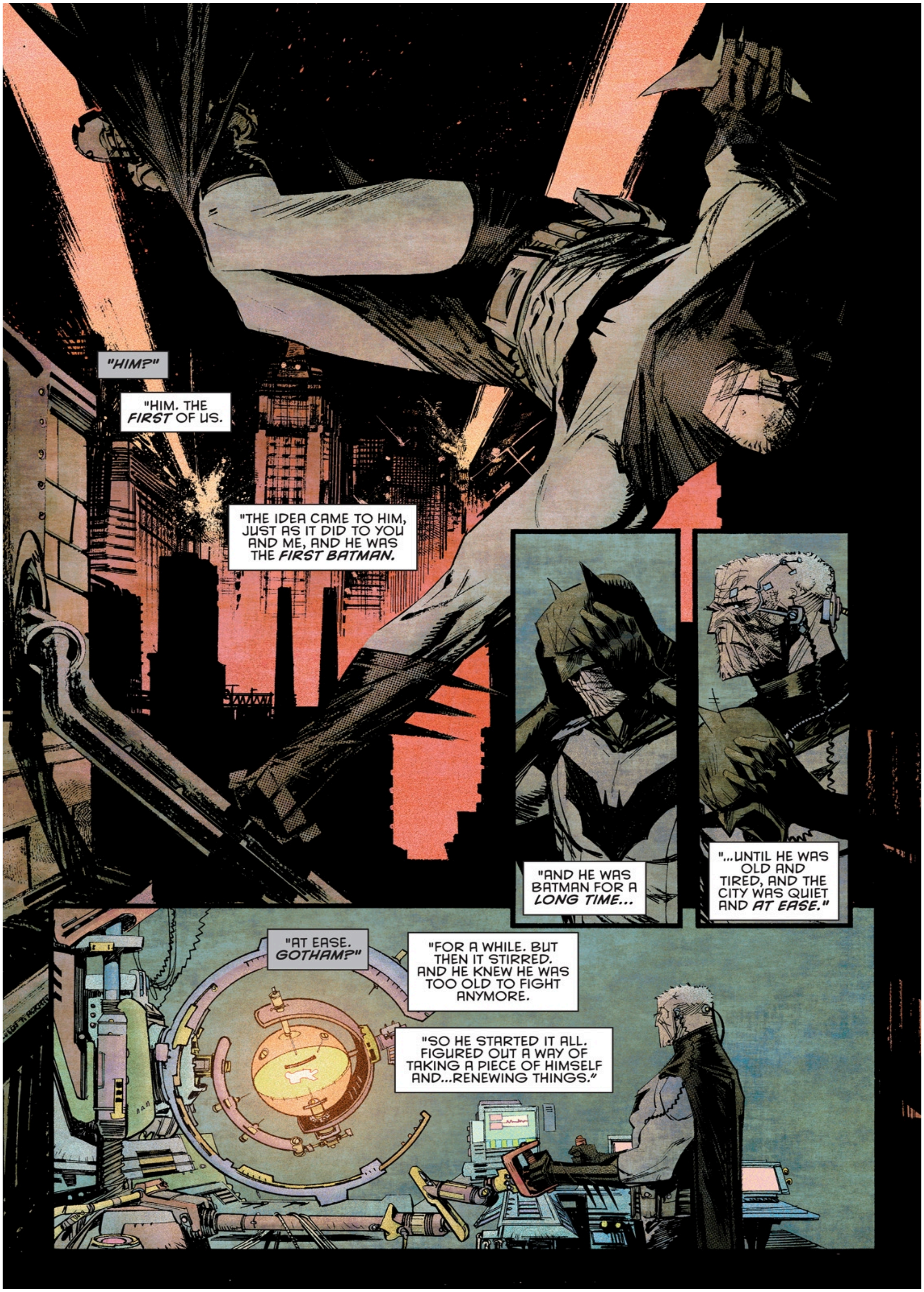

GAAH!
SHHH.
WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHERE AM I? I WAS SITTING IN THE STUDY AND--
SHH. IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU'RE HERE. YOU'RE ***HOME,*** BRUCE.
NO, YOU WEREN'T. YOU WERE RIGHT HERE THE WHOLE TIME...
BLUEBIRD
LARK

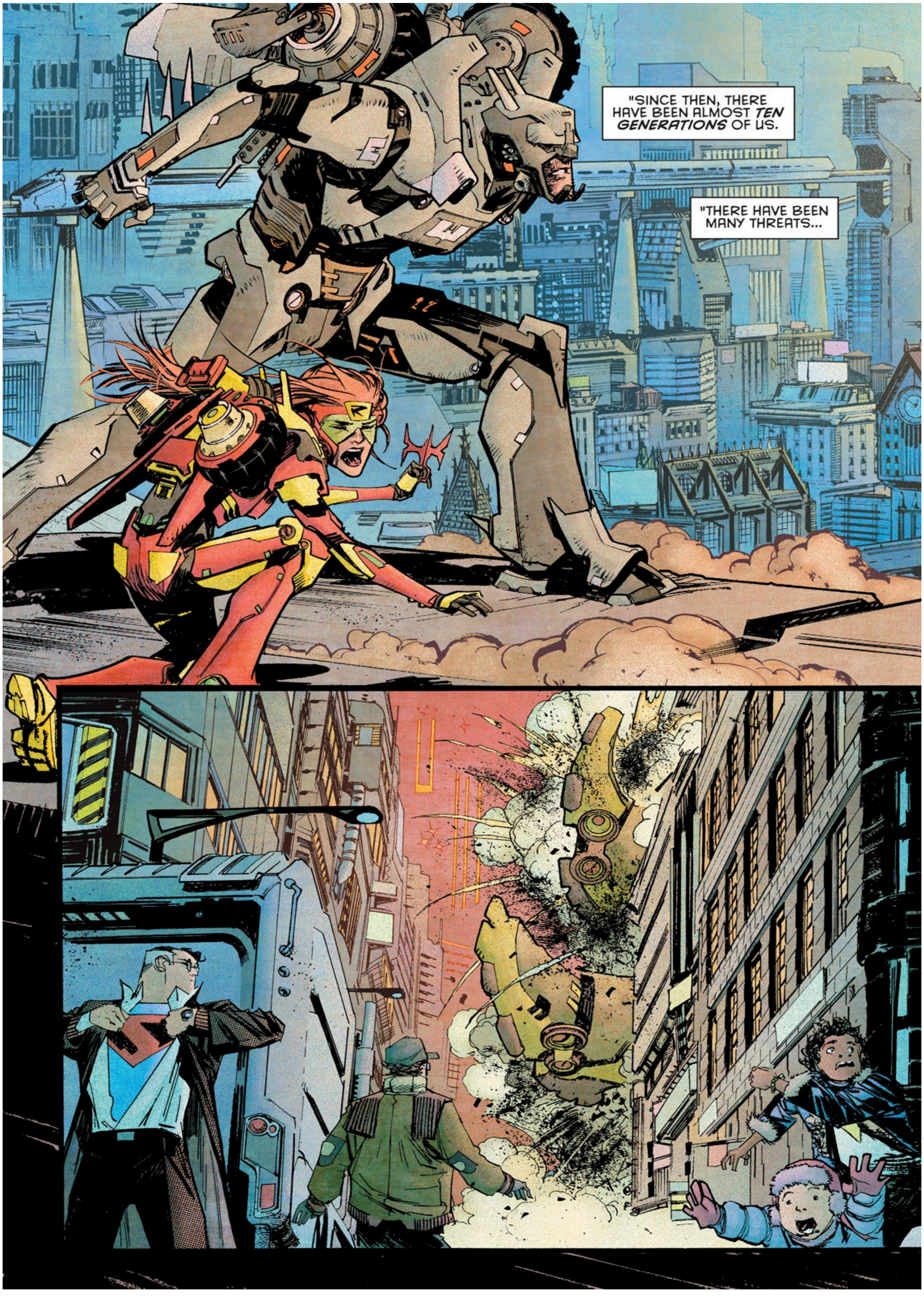


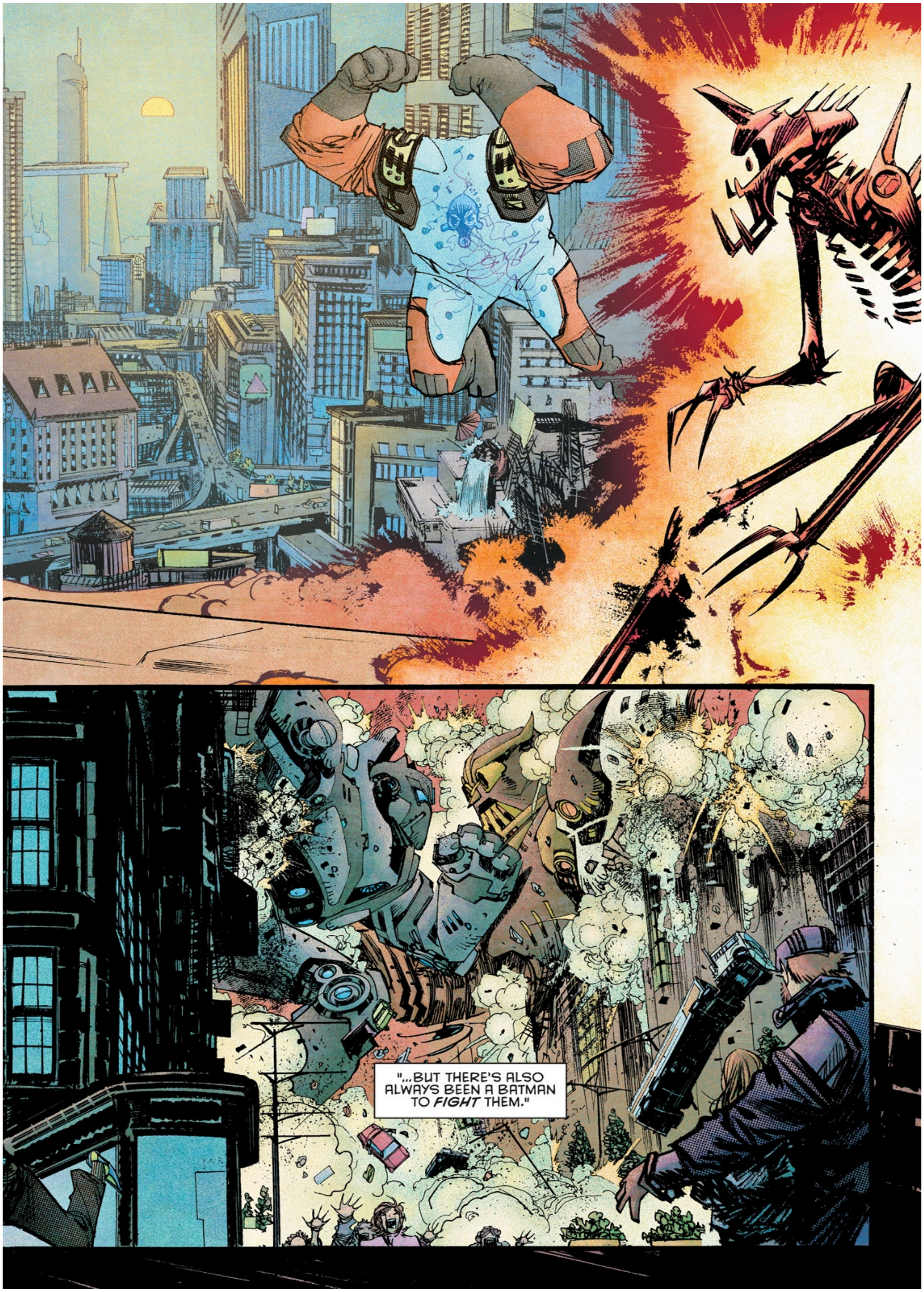
TWENTY-SEVEN

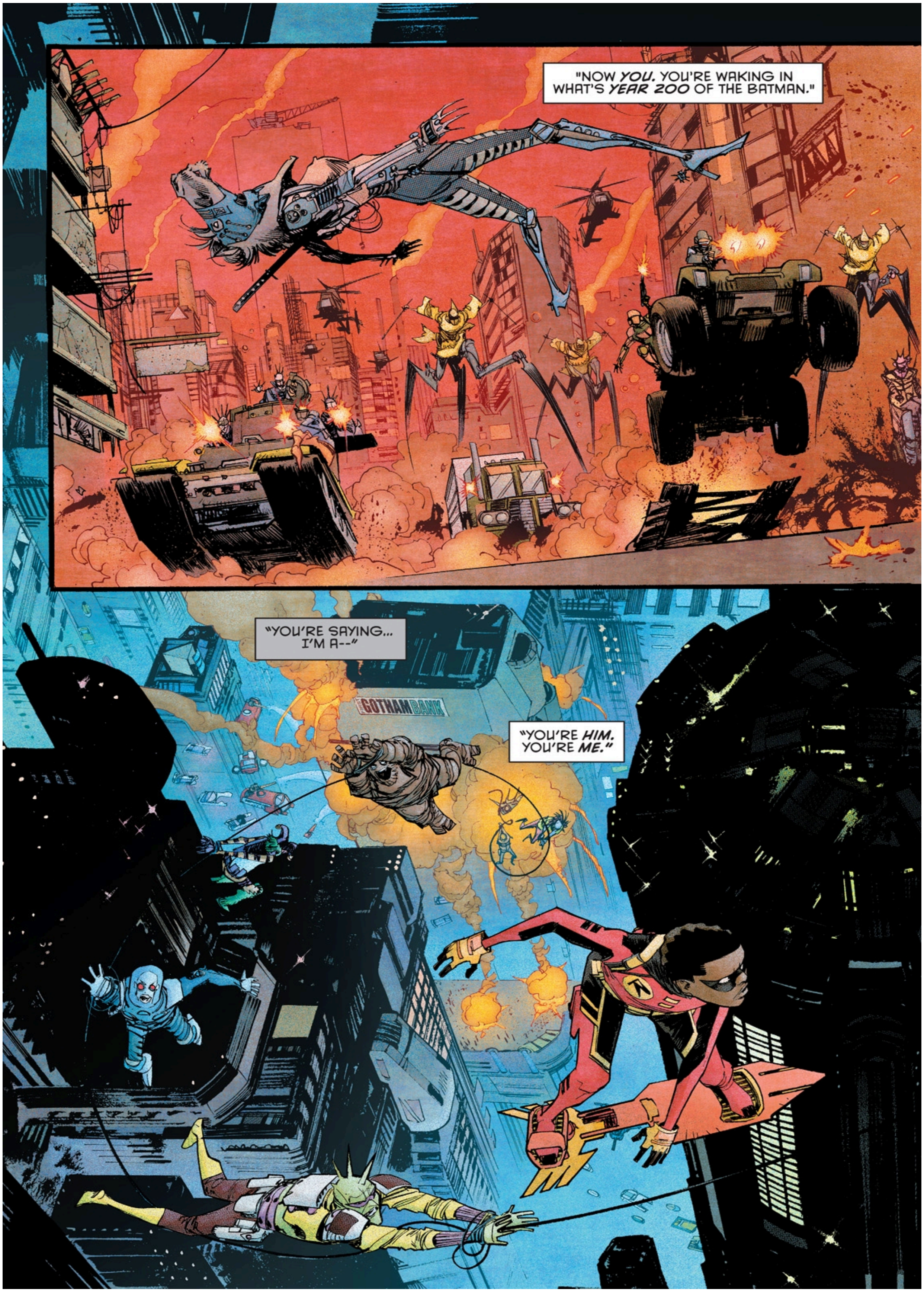
SCOTT SNYDER writer
SEAN MURPHY artist
MATT HOLLINGSWORTH colors
STEVE WANDS letters

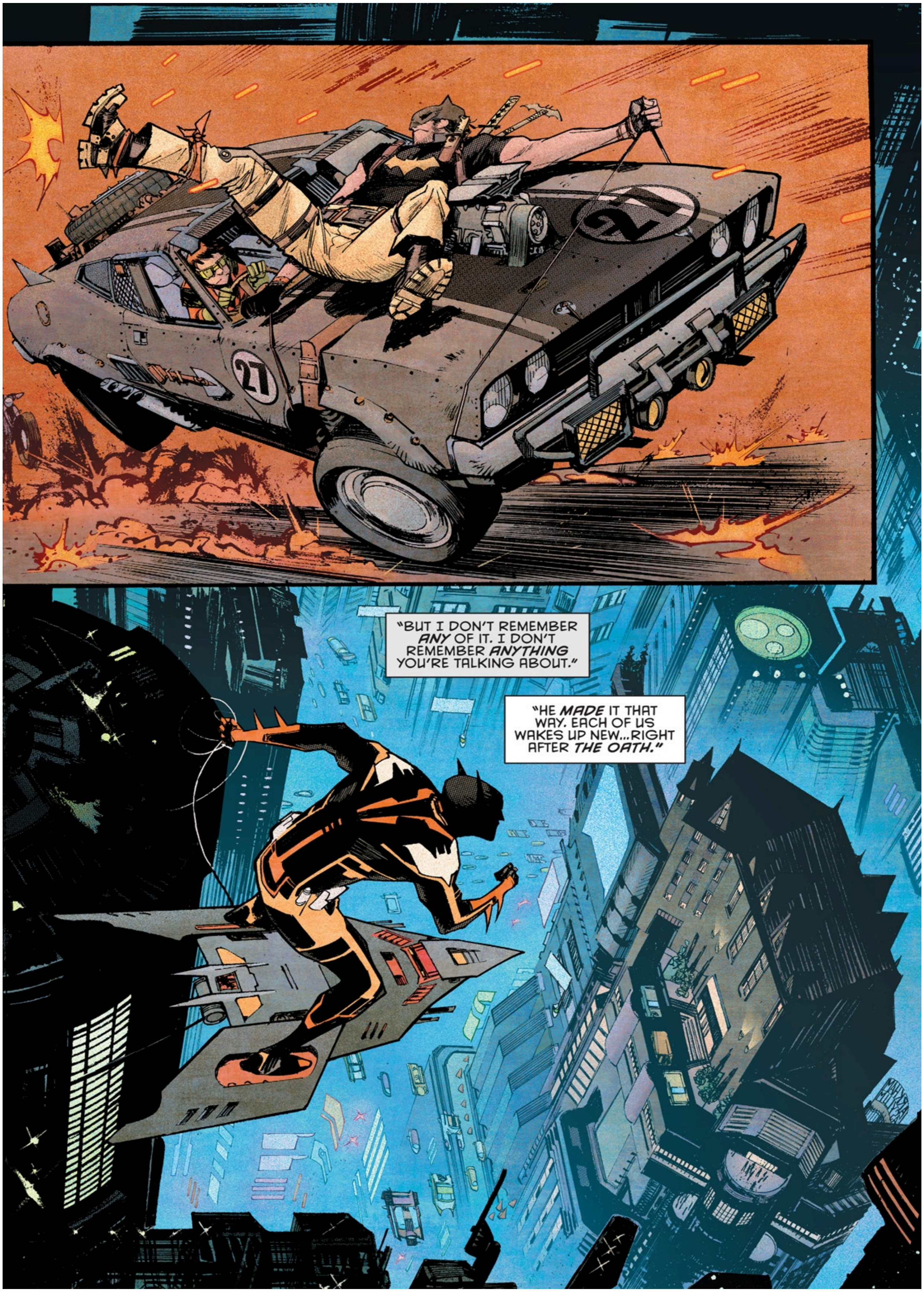

THE *CAVE?* BENEATH THE HOUSE? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO IT?
WHAT *IS* ALL THIS?
HEY! HEY, *YOU!* I'M *TALKING* TO YOU.
I HEAR YOU.
WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT YOU START TALKING, #$$%!
STARTING WITH *WHO THE HELL YOU ARE!*
ANSWER ME WHEN I'M TALKING TO YOU! *WHO ARE YOU?!*
WHUD!
I'M *YOU,* BOY.
I'M YOU. AND YOU'RE ME. AND WE'RE *BOTH* BATMAN.
...BATMAN? BUT--
THE IDEA ONLY JUST CAME TO YOU? *HEH.* NO, SEE, THE IDEA ACTUALLY CAME TO YOU, AND ME, AND *HIM,* MANY YEARS AGO.

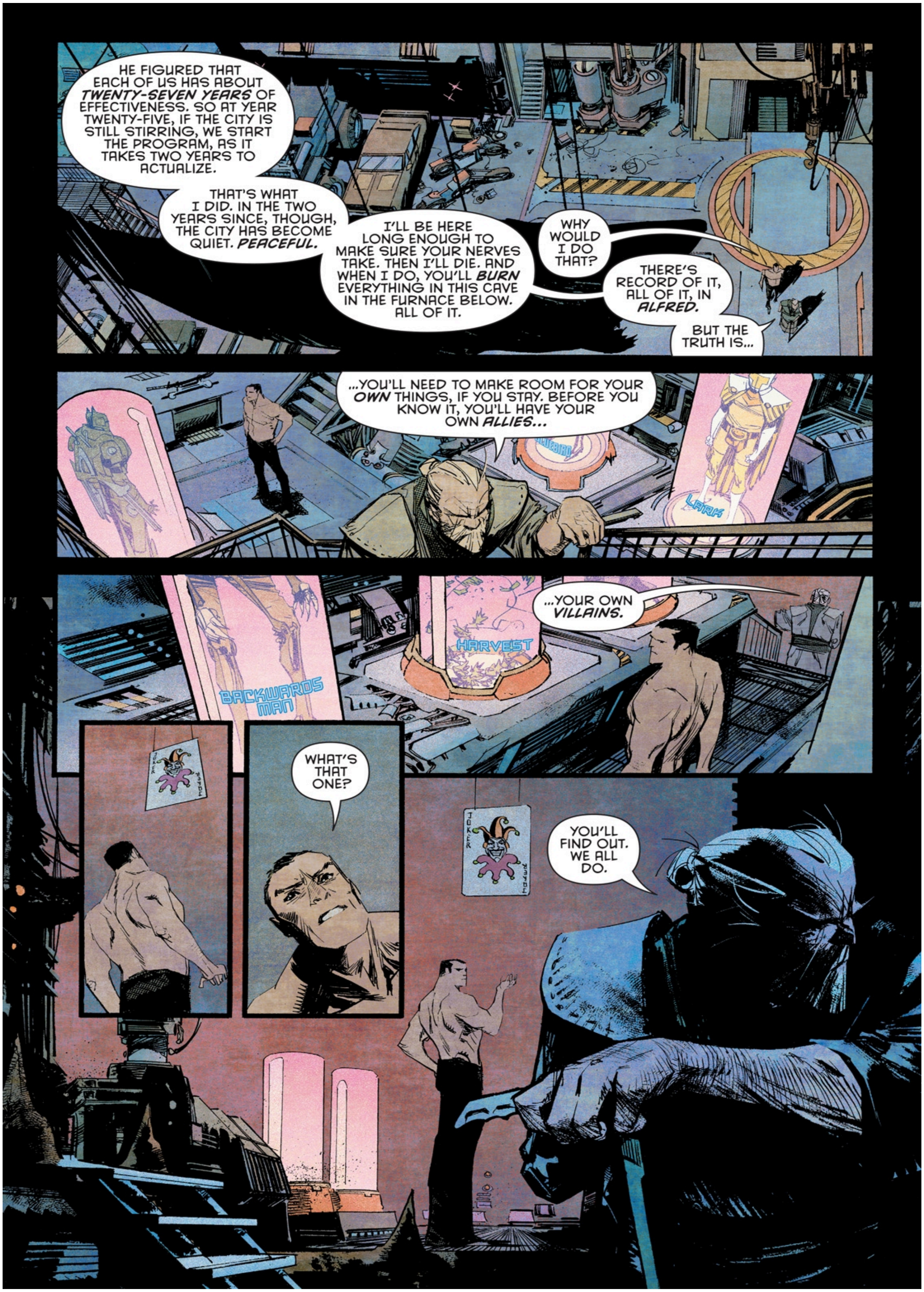

"HIM?"
"HIM. THE *FIRST* OF US.
"THE IDEA CAME TO HIM, JUST AS IT DID TO YOU AND ME, AND HE WAS THE *FIRST BATMAN.*
"AND HE WAS BATMAN FOR A *LONG TIME...*
"...UNTIL HE WAS OLD AND TIRED, AND THE CITY WAS QUIET AND *AT EASE."*
"AT EASE. *GOTHAM?"*
"FOR A WHILE. BUT THEN IT STIRRED. AND HE KNEW HE WAS TOO OLD TO FIGHT ANYMORE.
"SO HE STARTED IT ALL. FIGURED OUT A WAY OF TAKING A PIECE OF HIMSELF AND...RENEWING THINGS."

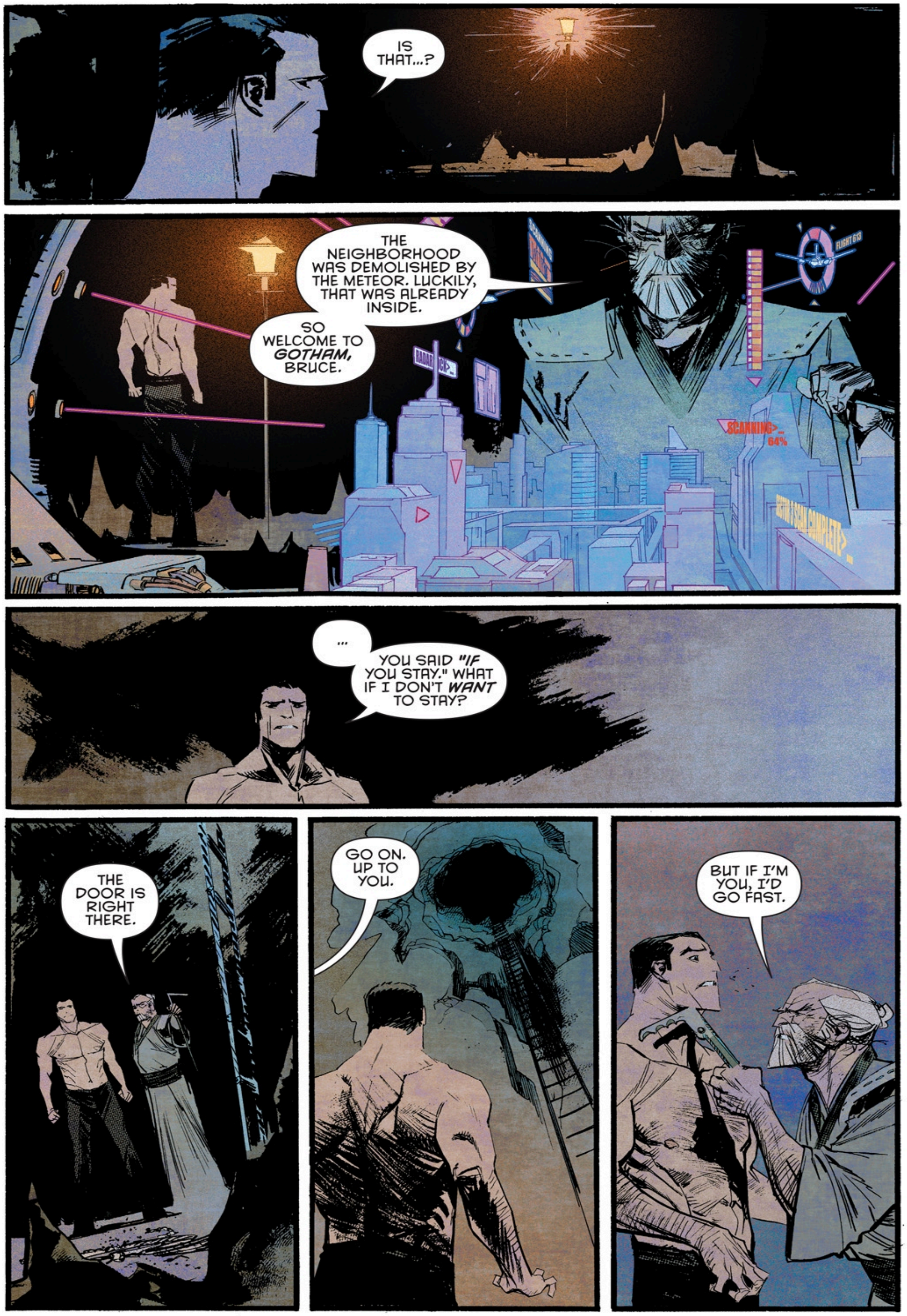

"SINCE THEN, THERE HAVE BEEN ALMOST *TEN GENERATIONS* OF US.
"THERE HAVE BEEN MANY THREATS...

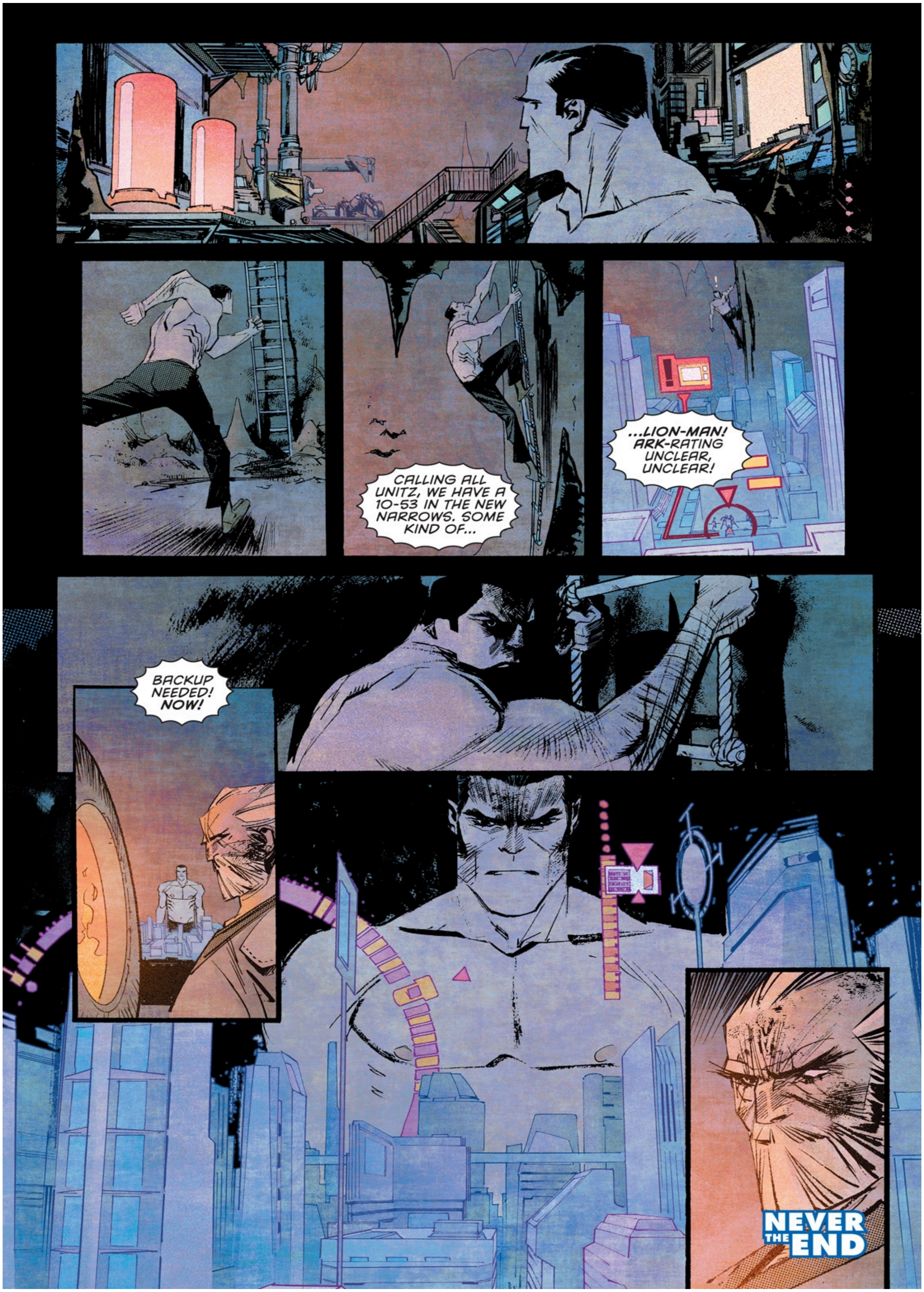

"...BUT THERE'S ALSO ALWAYS BEEN A BATMAN TO *FIGHT* THEM."

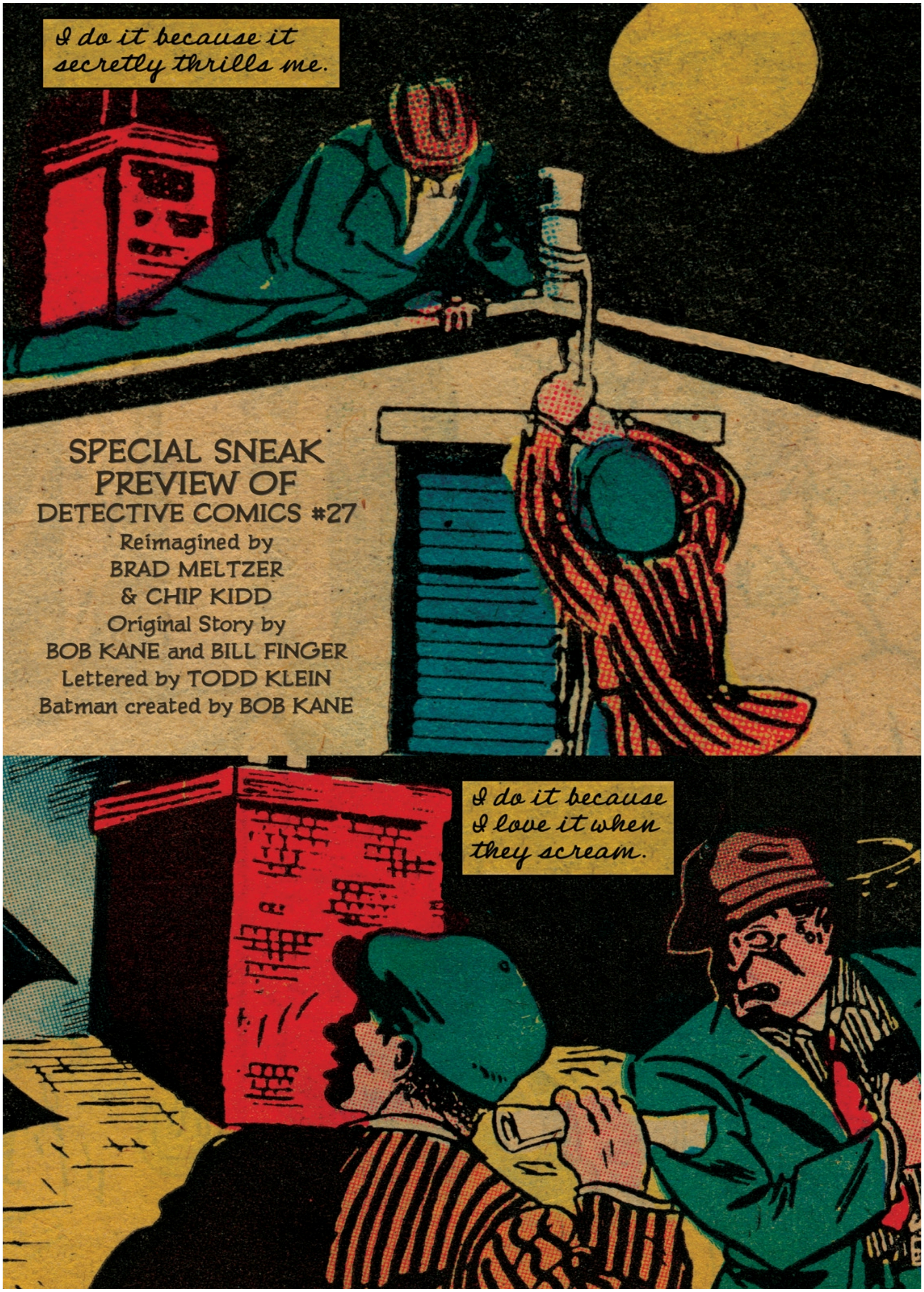

"NOW *YOU*. YOU'RE WAKING IN WHAT'S *YEAR 200* OF THE BATMAN."
"YOU'RE SAYING... I'M A--"
GOTHAM BANK
"YOU'RE *HIM*. YOU'RE *ME*."


"BUT I DON'T REMEMBER *ANY* OF IT. I DON'T REMEMBER *ANYTHING* YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT."
"HE *MADE* IT THAT WAY. EACH OF US WAKES UP NEW...RIGHT AFTER *THE OATH.*"


HE FIGURED THAT EACH OF US HAS ABOUT *TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS* OF EFFECTIVENESS. SO AT YEAR TWENTY-FIVE, IF THE CITY IS STILL STIRRING, WE START THE PROGRAM, AS IT TAKES TWO YEARS TO ACTUALIZE.
THAT'S WHAT I DID. IN THE TWO YEARS SINCE, THOUGH, THE CITY HAS BECOME QUIET. *PEACEFUL.*
I'LL BE HERE LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE SURE YOUR NERVES TAKE. THEN I'LL DIE. AND WHEN I DO, YOU'LL *BURN* EVERYTHING IN THIS CAVE IN THE FURNACE BELOW. ALL OF IT.
WHY WOULD I DO THAT?
THERE'S RECORD OF IT, ALL OF IT, IN *ALFRED.*
BUT THE TRUTH IS...
...YOU'LL NEED TO MAKE ROOM FOR YOUR *OWN* THINGS, IF YOU STAY. BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR OWN *ALLIES...*
LARK
...YOUR OWN *VILLAINS.*
HARVEST
BACKWARDS MAN
JOKER
WHAT'S THAT ONE?
JOKER
YOU'LL FIND OUT. WE ALL DO.


IS THAT...?
THE NEIGHBORHOOD WAS DEMOLISHED BY THE METEOR. LUCKILY, THAT WAS ALREADY INSIDE.
SO WELCOME TO *GOTHAM,* BRUCE.
SCANNING
RADAR
FLIGHT 613
SCANNING>_ 64%
SECTOR 3 SCAN COMPLETE>_
...
YOU SAID *"IF* YOU STAY." WHAT IF I DON'T *WANT* TO STAY?
THE DOOR IS RIGHT THERE.
GO ON. UP TO YOU.
BUT IF I'M YOU, I'D GO FAST.

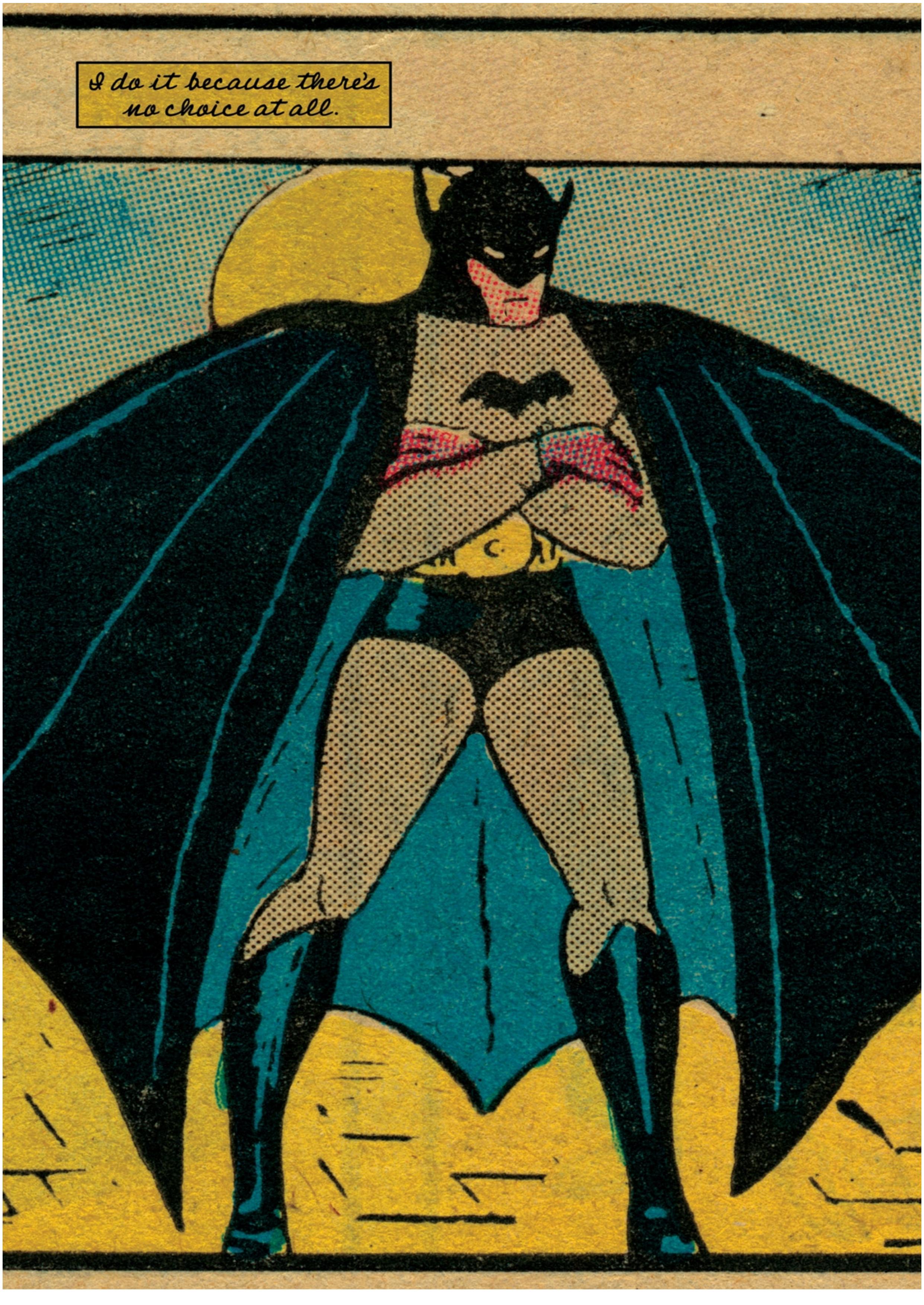

CALLING ALL UNITZ, WE HAVE A 10-53 IN THE NEW NARROWS. SOME KIND OF...
...LION-MAN! ARK-RATING UNCLEAR, UNCLEAR!
BACKUP NEEDED! NOW!
NEVER THE END

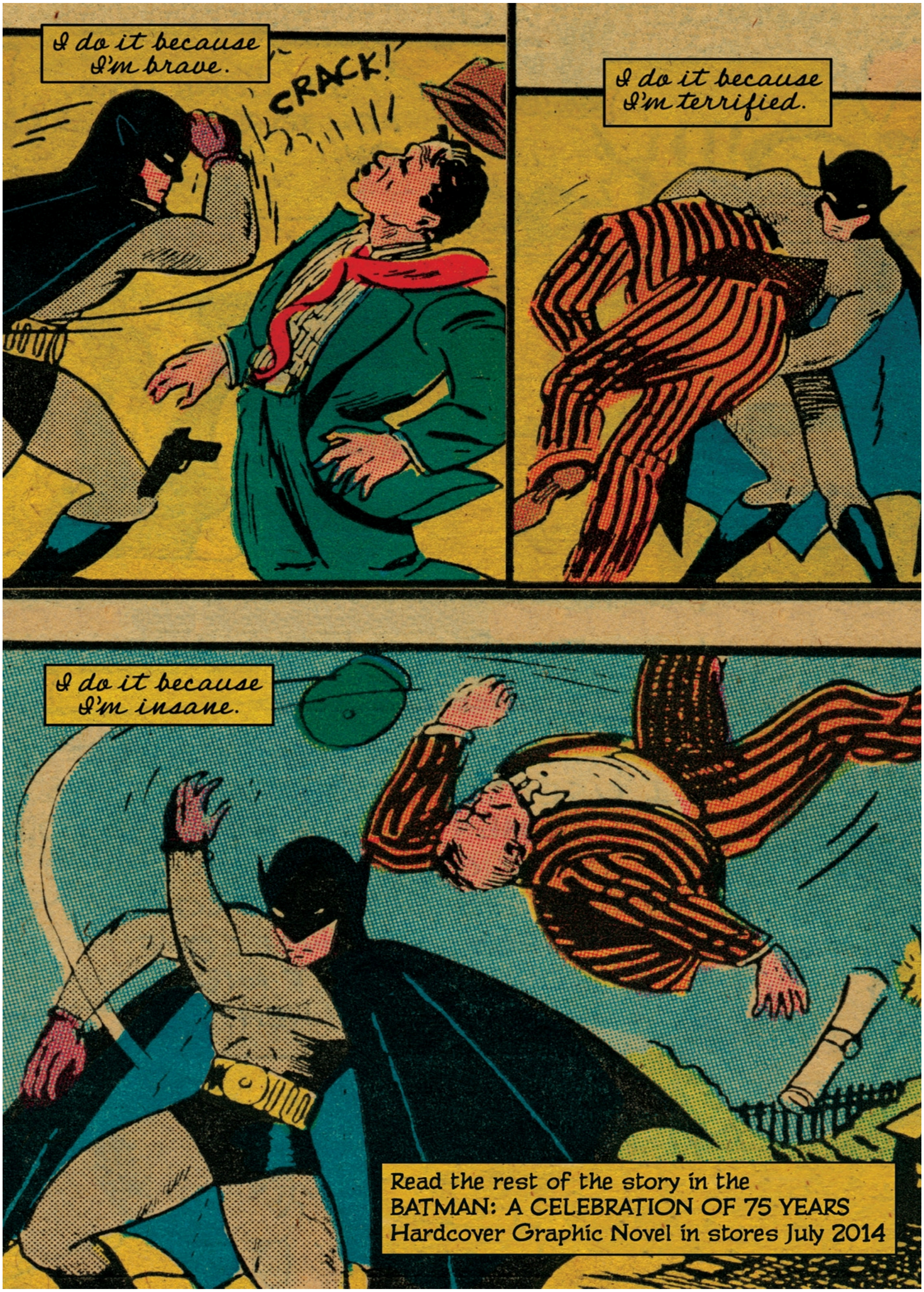


I do it because it secretly thrills me.
I do it because I love it when they scream.

SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEW OF DETECTIVE COMICS #27

Reimagined by
BRAD MELTZER
& CHIP KIDD
Original Story by
BOB KANE and BILL FINGER
Lettered by TODD KLEIN
Batman created by BOB KANE


I do it because there's no choice at all.


I do it because I'm brave.
CRACK!
I do it because I'm terrified.
I do it because I'm insane.

Read the rest of the story in the
BATMAN: A CELEBRATION OF 75 YEARS
Hardcover Graphic Novel in stores July 2014

[redacted]